

AUG 25 1942

Local Government SERVICE

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICERS

N.E.C. PLAN
FOR SOCIAL
INSURANCE

—Page 163

No. 8. Vol. XXII.

AUGUST, 1942 — C.1.

THREEPENCE

SOCIAL SECURITY

AT the NALGO Conference this year there passed, almost unnoticed, an item which has in it the seeds of more revolutionary changes in the social scheme of things and in local government than possibly any other event in the past fifty years.

The Yorkshire District Committee tabled a notice of motion relating to the appointment by the Government of what is known as the "Beveridge Committee." The N.E.C., meeting on the eve of Conference, had appointed a committee to deal with a request from the Beveridge Committee for its views, and that committee's report, as approved by the Council, appears on another page in this month's Journal.

What is this Beveridge Committee, and to what extent does it foreshadow changes affecting the lives of everybody in greater or less degree, and a complete alteration of certain aspects of local government and administration? In the official language used, the committee is set up by the Government: "to undertake, with special reference to the inter-relation of the schemes, a survey of the existing schemes of national insurance and allied services, including workmen's compensation, and to make recommendations."

No Comprehensive Plan

These terms of reference will repay careful examination. The present systems of insurance and allied services have, like Topsy, "just growed" but, unlike Topsy, have not "growed in one piece." The result is a labyrinth of Acts, Orders, and regulations which is an anathema to the official and a bewilderment to the layman. Successive Governments have applied panaceas, often under the pressure of public opinion, separately to each problem, and nowhere can there be traced a comprehensive, intelligible plan. Not only this, but the wide variety of Government departments, local authorities, insurance societies, committees, institutions, and bodies, all undertaking their own sectionalised activities, in almost every case without regard to what is being done elsewhere, precludes the meeting of human problems in a humane manner, as well as being uneconomic and wasteful.

Consider for a moment the present situation in relation to social insurance and allied services. There is national health insurance, giving cash and medical benefits, with additional benefits which vary considerably. There are exceptions and exemptions of certain classes of workers. There is unemployment insurance, from which again, certain classes of workers are excluded. There are the widows', orphans' and old age contributory pensions, with supplementation in certain cases. There are blind pensions and assistance from the Assistance Board. Workmen's compensation is another example of insurance. Only those who have to deal with this Act can fully appreciate not only the difficulty of its interpretation but its shortcomings. Local authorities play a big part in providing social security. Their hospitals, public assistance institutions,

homes for the aged poor, homes for children, and mental hospitals, the maternity and child welfare clinics, midwifery, health and dental services, tuberculosis services, school health and feeding services, housing, are all part and parcel of social security. Finally, in theory, public assistance outdoor relief gathers up all

the invitation of the Beveridge Committee to apply the wide range of interest and experience of its members to the whole problem of social insurance. It has taken the latter course, thus making a bold incursion into national politics, and going far beyond "the treatment of local government officers for the purpose of the various national insurance schemes and the position of local officials in any proposals."

There is here a challenge to the Association, for it means, in effect, that the N.E.C. has decided that the experience of NALGO as a body shall be devoted to the national interest as well as to the interests of its individual members.

A Nation-wide Scheme

The suggested solution of a nation-wide social security insurance scheme, advanced by the N.E.C., merits the most careful consideration. Unless the present confusion is to be worse confounded, it is difficult to see what other proposition can be seriously put forward that will remove the existing anomalies and give that measure of security which should be one of the prime aims of any civilisation. Indeed, it is significant that the Beveridge Committee was formed within a few months of the publication of the Atlantic Charter, which sets out as one of its points, "the desire to bring about the fullest collaboration between all nations in the economic field, with the object of securing for all improved labour standards, economic advancement and social security." It is now freely recognised that one of the fundamental causes of the present conflict is the absence in pre-war Europe of proper labour standards, economic well being, and social security.

Questions of cost and the detailed working out of any scheme are beyond the purview of the N.E.C. and it has contented itself with the broad principle that contributions should be compulsory upon all persons, and shared, as are many insurances to-day, between employer, employee, and the State.

There is, however, one aspect of cost that has to be borne in mind. No scheme can be instituted without regard to the national economy. Whatever else can be said about the present war economy, it has made a vast difference to the solvency of the unemployment insurance fund. The transition from war economy to post-war economy will be gradual and only the Government can so plan the national economy that the cost of the ideal—the provision as of right of social security for all—can be brought within the realm of practical finance.

Few local government officers will quarrel with the statement that there is an unanswerable case for the administration of treatment benefits by local authorities. Strides made in public health administration have been very largely due to the fact that the work was entrusted to local authorities. Nevertheless, it must be admitted that local authorities have been hampered in that they have not always been constituted on a basis that is appropriate

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those for whom the above benefits either do not exist or are insufficient.

Council's Bold Decision

The list is formidable, but far from complete. The need for a survey is obvious, and it is equally obvious that the recommendations of the Beveridge Committee may be far-reaching; their repercussions on the local government officer are bound to be profound. It is no wonder, then, that the secretary of the Beveridge Committee, in his communication to NALGO, wrote: "It is rather difficult to indicate the particular subjects upon which the Committee would like the observations of your Association. One question which your Association may wish to raise is the treatment of local government officials for the purposes of the various national insurance schemes. Another probable subject is the position of local officials under any proposals to transfer powers from a local authority either to another local authority or to a central authority. But, in addition, there may be other, probably more general, matters which are important to members of your Association or to which you feel the wide range of interest and experience of your Association requires you to call attention."

As in all matters, one of two policies could have been adopted by NALGO: it could have examined the problem of social security solely from the point of view of the local government officer, making recommendations to the Beveridge Committee designed solely to protect his interests; or it could have accepted

to present day conditions. Their record is perhaps, therefore, the more meritorious. The report, however, in its recommendation that administration should be undertaken by the local authority, also envisages that the local authorities will be reconstituted.

It would be stupid to suggest that social security departments of local authorities could be staffed entirely from existing local government officers, and, indeed, there is no such suggestion. NALGO would wish to pay tribute to the magnificent work that has been done, often in very difficult circumstances, by Government departments, insurance societies, and voluntary organisations. Any comprehensive scheme must ensure that this experience and service is utilised to the full in the administration of the common aim.

The Third Freedom . . .

In the midst of the many burdens imposed by the war on local government officers, it will not be easy to spare the necessary time to think about these things, and still less to make a contribution to the N.E.C.'s policy through the medium of these columns or by letter direct to the general secretary; but local government officers have much at stake. They may take the narrow view and think only of how this matter affects their own work and their own positions, and in this, if they put forward the result of their deliberations, they will be fulfilling a valuable function. On the other hand, they may, like the N.E.C., accept it as a challenge to give their best thought to the solution of one of the major causes of war, and thus in a very real sense help to win the conflict in which we are engaged.

It may perhaps not be inappropriate to conclude with two quotations.

"In the future days we seek to make secure we look forward to a world founded upon four essential freedoms . . . The third is freedom from want . . ."

"This is no basis of a distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation."

"There stand before us two naked alternatives. On the one side Western Civilisation may for a time take a plunge back into a darker age than we have ever known before. On the other we may rise to levels of national unselfishness and vision and dedication which may give mankind the greatest new birth of freedom it has ever known."

Dictators in Our Midst

MANY of the branches whose contributions to the work of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee are reviewed in this month's journal refer to the party system, and in particular to the power of the party caucus, as one of the most damaging influences in modern local government. An illuminating illustration of the way in which this system operates has recently been provided in Coventry.

In 1937 the County Councils Association, the Association of Municipal Corporations, the Association of Education Committees, and the Association of Directors and Secretaries of Education issued to all their constituent members (including Coventry) an agreed recommendation that chief education officers should be recognised as equal in rank with the chief officers of other major departments other than the town clerk. Coventry education committee concurred with the proposal and, at its request, the council agreed to reconsider the position of the director of education, whose maximum salary had been fixed in 1933 at £1,350, whereas the maximum salaries of the other chief officers stood at £1,500, if and when a general review of salaries was undertaken. But, though the question was raised again by the education committee in 1938 and 1939, on each occasion the council turned it down.

In June this year a sub-committee of the education committee, which was attended by

the chairman of the Labour group and a majority of Labour party members decided *nemine contradicente* to ask the council once

ANY QUESTIONS? HAVE YOU ANY QUESTIONS TO ASK NALGO —

About its policy, programme, aims, and operation?

About the services it renders, or which you think it should render, to members?

About salaries and service conditions in local government, and the steps the Association is taking to improve them?

Of course you have—every member has some questions he would like to put.

— THEN SEND THEM TO THE BRAINS TRUST

The NALGO Brains Trust has been formed to give expert and authoritative answers to members' questions on every aspect of the Association's affairs.

It will hold its first session in the September number of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE.

Send your questions to the Editor, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex.

again to increase the salary of the director to £1,500. The sub-committee appointed the chairman and vice-chairman of the education committee to put the case for the increase before the salaries committee. This time they converted that committee, which recommended that the council confirm the increase.

When the minute came before the council on July 7, however, neither the chairman nor the vice-chairman of the education committee was present to support it. The chairman of the Labour party group opposed it, and he and several Labour members of the education committee voted against it—with the result that it was rejected by 26 votes to 19.

When this decision was reported to a subsequent meeting of the education committee, the reason for the sudden change of attitude by the members of the Labour group was revealed. Before the council meeting there had been a meeting of the group, which had instructed its members to oppose the recommendation. The chairman of the education committee, who is a member of the group, said:

"I have always been in favour of the recommendation. In my judgment, the status of the director should be placed on a level with the other chief officials . . . It is a fact that before a council meeting decisions are arrived at in a party group, and in the

Many Members in

THE names of many members of NALGO appeared in the King's Birthday Honours, issued on June 11—fitting tribute to the outstanding achievements of the local government service, particularly in the field of civil defence.

Every effort has been made to make the list published below complete and accurate. If, however, any recipients of honours have been inadvertently omitted, we ask them to accept our apologies and their branch secretaries to send us details.

COMMANDERS OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

K. Tweedale Meaby, Clerk to the Council and A.R.P. Controller, Nottinghamshire.

H. Morris, Secretary, Cambridgeshire Education Committee and a pioneer in the development of the remarkable village colleges in Cambridgeshire.

C. W. Radcliffe, Clerk to the Middlesex C.C.

G. C. Vaughan, Chief Constable and deputy A.R.P. Controller, West Riding C.C.

OFFICERS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

S. Critchley Auty, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Bromley.

H. E. Brooke-Bradley, deputy County Surveyor, Worcestershire; a past president and now vice-president of the Worcester C.C. branch, in the reinvigoration of which he played a leading part.

J. Clegg, Town Clerk and A.R.P. Controller, Chesterfield.

J. T. Davidson, No. 1 Area, Scotland N.F.S.

H. M. Enderby, City Surveyor, Canterbury.

R. H. B. Jesse, Executive Officer, East Sussex War

Labour group we are expected to be loyal to the group decision. In view of that, I could not see any purpose in coming to the meeting of the council, where I would have to sit gagged . . ."

One councillor declared that the chairman had been shot from behind by his colleagues; another protested that the Labour group had "got what Germany is trying to bring to England." But the education committee which, a month before, had approved without a dissentient voice the recommended increase in the director's salary, defeated by 11 votes to 7 a resolution of protest and regret at the decision of the council.

Party Loyalty First

This is a long and not a pretty story. It shows clearly that, in Coventry—as in other places where the party group system operates—loyalty to party comes first before loyalty to constituents, to the council, to its committees, or to a councillor's personal convictions. He attends the council, not as an individual elected by the ratepayers to represent and defend their interests in the light of his conscience, but as a party robot, voting as a party caucus dictates. As the "Coventry Evening Telegraph" pointed out in a leading article on the incident:

"No member of the Socialist party is permitted to express a personal opinion before the city council if that opinion is contrary to the group's policy. . . . A most untenable situation, and one whose reaction upon local government leaves little scope for the dignity of individual opinion."

We should use even stronger terms, and describe this sort of thing as party dictatorship little removed in principle from the party dictatorship we, as a nation, are fighting today. It is not, of course, confined to the Labour party, and we do not condemn that party alone. It is a practice, unfortunately, followed by all parties, and it is a practice that seems to be increasing. We condemn it wherever it is to be found. It is contrary to all that we understand by democracy, and unless it is stamped out it will mean the end of democratic local government in this country.

"Bolton Case" in The Lords

NALGO's appeal to the House of Lords against the decision of the Court of Appeal prohibiting the National Arbitration Tribunal from adjudicating in a dispute between the Association and Bolton Corporation over the refusal of the latter to make up war service pay, was heard last month, but judgment had not been delivered when the journal went to press. We hope to publish a full report next month.

Birthday Honours

Agricultural Executive Committee.

D. M. John, Town Clerk, Swindon.

Vernon Lawrence, Clerk to the Council, and A.R.P. Controller, Monmouthshire.

E. K. MacDonald, Medical Officer of Health, Leicester.

Capt. H. C. Marris, Clerk to the Council, and A.R.P. Controller, Holland C.C.

MEMBERS OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE

M. W. Beale, Chief Administrative Officer for Civil Defence, Lancashire C.C.

C. J. Goulson, Divisional A.R.P. Sub-Controller, Skegness.

R. I. Hicks, A.R.P. Officer, Glamorgan C.C., and a member of the branch executive committee.

H. Houghton, Rating and Valuation Officer and Billeting Officer, Newton-le-Willows.

D. P. Jones, Clerk and Chief Billeting Officer, Dolgellau R.D.C.

L. Massey, A.R.P. Officer, Halifax.

F. B. Matthews, Public Assistance Officer, Lindsey C.C.

Miss I. M. Ralph, Superintendent Health Visitor, Bristol.

T. Robinson, Cleansing Superintendent, Newcastle-upon-Tyne.

Capt. J. E. Slattery, Chief A.R.P. Officer, Hertfordshire C.C.

C. S. Speed, Acting Chief Architectural Assistant Borough Engineer's Department, Southampton.

Miss G. M. R. Thwaites, assistant Public Assistance Officer, Newcastle-upon-Tyne; and a member of the North Eastern district committee and of the staff side of the North Eastern provincial council.

H. Travers, deputy A.R.P. Controller, Bermondsey.

E. R. Tyzack, Chief Engineering Assistant, Gt. Yarmouth C.B.

J. H. Wright, Civil Defence Training Officer, Smethwick.

A NEW DEAL FOR THOSE IN NEED

NALGO's Plan for National Social Security Insurance

FAR-REACHING proposals for a national scheme of social security insurance were approved by the National Executive Council when it met in London on July 11. The proposals, prepared by a special committee of the Council, have been submitted in the name of NALGO to the Interdepartmental Committee on Social Insurance and Allied Services, set up by the Government under the chairmanship of Sir William Beveridge, in response to a request for the Association's views.

The committee which had drawn up the scheme consisted of Messrs. T. Nolan (chairman), L. Bevan, W. R. Beevers, F. E. Cox, W. O. Dodd, P. H. Harrold, and J. H. Tyrell.

The report submitted, after reviewing the wide variety of existing schemes of social insurance and agencies, national and local, for the relief of distress, draws attention to the following anomalies in the present situation. Overlapping and confusion of authorities, with administrative delays, lead to unnecessary hardship and inconvenience for recipients under the present division of the services involved between the pensions authorities, Ministry of Labour, approved societies, and public assistance and public health services.

There is lack of coherence in policy, some benefits (e.g. national health insurance) being paid on a flat rate, and some (e.g. workmen's compensation) on a graded system.

Local adjudication of hardship co-ordinated with other local welfare services is essential, and this does not exist in nationally administered schemes.

The report then sets out NALGO's proposals for a solution of the problem in the following terms:

The ideal scheme would be a single Social Security Insurance covering

Health;

Unemployment (general and agricultural); Compensation for industrial accident and disease;

Widows' and orphans' pensions;

Old age pensions.

Such a scheme, it is suggested, should be created on the following lines:

Administration

I. Personal Contact.—There is an unanswerable case for the administration of all treatment benefits by local authorities on account of the need for immediacy in supplying treatment and of personal contact with recipients. Retention of such contact and of humanitarian interest between administrators and recipients is of the greatest importance. The excellent record of public health administration under local authorities is also a strong argument in favour of the discharge by them of this responsibility.

Any national scheme must necessarily include local administrative units so constituted as to maintain close contact with the public and with other services concerned with public welfare. It is, therefore, suggested that the logical step for securing economical and closely integrated administration of social insurance schemes would be the administration of all benefits through social security departments of local authorities.

Difficulties, formerly encountered in the administration by local authorities of cash benefits would largely be removed through the unification of policy and of rates of payment under a national scheme.

II. Economy.—In order to achieve true economy there should therefore be:

- One uniform scheme, as outlined above;
- One inclusive contribution, with one

stamp to cover all social insurance; and

(c) One administrative point in each local authority administering the scheme.

It is essential that local authorities should be trusted to administer the scheme and should not be meticulously supervised.

III. Exceptions.—The Committee is not in favour of the granting of certificates of exception. The exceptions so far granted with regard to National Health Insurance have been of doubtful benefit, and it is not considered possible to recommend contracting out of part of a unified scheme.

Contributions and Benefits

There should be uniformity in rates of contribution and benefit throughout the country, implying central control of policy.

(a) **Contributions**—should be shared between employer, employee, and the State, and should be compulsory upon all gainfully occupied persons; provision should be made for the voluntary insurance of persons maintained by private means.

(b) **Benefits.**—There should be a universal flat rate of benefit above subsistence level, with provision for dependants, as is the case in unemployment insurance and workers' compensation.

(c) **Supplementary Benefits.**—All cases of supplementation of benefit and of assistance to persons outside the scheme should be dealt with by the local authorities in accordance with uniform scales. The number of residual cases would be very substantially reduced under a unified scheme.

(d) **Private Insurance Schemes**—should continue to be available for persons desiring to cover themselves further in accordance with their means.

(3) **Occupational Pensions Schemes.**—Schemes such as the local government officers', civil servants', teachers', etc., pension schemes should continue to operate.

Charitable Organisations

It is hoped that the scheme outlined would reduce to a minimum the need for alleviation of hardship through charitable organisations; where any such remained, there should be close liaison between the charitable organisations and the authorities administering the insurance scheme.

In addition to the above proposals, NALGO has submitted to the Beveridge Committee, through the Local Government Advisory Committee of the T.U.C. and direct, a separate memorandum on the more restricted question of compensation for local government officers who might be adversely affected by legislation arising out of the Beveridge Committee's proposals.

Any such legislation, it is urged, should provide for the protection of the interests of existing employees who may be affected, including provisions:

- For compensation of any existing employee who, by virtue of the legislation . . . suffers any direct pecuniary loss by reason of the determination of his appointment or the diminution of his emoluments; the compensation to be calculated in accordance with the principles contained in the Fourth Schedule to the Local Government Act, 1933;
- For the transfer of existing employees of any body whose functions are transferred to any other body;
- That no employee so transferred shall, without his consent, be by reason of the transfer in any worse position in respect to the conditions of his service as a whole as compared with the conditions of service formerly obtaining with respect to him;

4. That any transferred employee who at any time within five years after the date of his transfer is called upon to perform duties which are not analogous to, or which are an unreasonable addition to, those which he was required to perform immediately before that date shall have the right to relinquish his employment;

5. That any transferred employee who relinquishes his employment in the circumstances outlined in (4) above, or whose employment is determined or whose emoluments are reduced within five years after the date of his transfer, because his services are not required or his duties are diminished and not on account of misconduct or incapacity . . . shall be deemed to have suffered a direct pecuniary loss by virtue of the legislation;

6. For an existing employee . . . who is aggrieved in regard to the manner in which his claim for compensation is dealt with . . . to have a right of appeal to the appropriate Minister, whose determination shall be final.

After approving the report, the Council appointed four members of the committee which prepared it, Messrs. Nolan, Dodd, Harrold, and Tyrell, together with Mr. J. H. Warren, chairman of the Reconstruction Committee, to give oral evidence before the Beveridge Committee if called on to do so.

T.U.C. AFFILIATION Plans for the Ballot

Another important matter dealt with by the N.E.C. was the ballot on affiliation to the Trades Union Congress requested by Conference. The following arrangements were agreed:

Ballot papers will be issued to members not later than October 1, and will be in two colours, one for members in the Forces and the other for members, permanent and temporary, serving local authorities. This will make it possible to discover what proportion of members in the Forces are able to vote.

Members serving local authorities will be required to return their papers by October 31. Those serving in the Forces will be required to return them by May 15, 1943. This will allow the maximum time for receipt of votes from overseas, while making it possible to announce the result of the ballot before the 1943 Conference.

Papers will be sent by Headquarters to branch secretaries, who will be responsible for distributing them to members at home and circulating them to members in the Forces.

Every person who is a member in accordance with the rules at the time of the ballot—i.e. "a local government officer who pays, through a branch, the subscription and any other moneys due from him provided for by these rules; and whose name appears in the register, and has not been ordered to be removed therefrom under the provisions of these rules"—will be entitled to vote.

Each member will be supplied with an envelope and it will be his duty, after recording his vote on the ballot paper, to seal it in the envelope and write his name on the back of the envelope.

Votes of members at home will be collected by branch secretaries and forwarded by them to Headquarters. Members in the Forces will have to send their votes direct to Headquarters.

Ballot papers will be printed at Headquarters. Suggestions that ballot papers should be accompanied by a statement of the arguments for and against affiliation, or that such a

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statement should be published in LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE before the ballot, were rejected, on the ground that the arguments had been fully stated in the report of the discussion at Conference.

Other references from Conference were referred to the appropriate committees of the Council.

Many other items dealt with in a long agenda included:

Collaboration with National Union of Teachers.—At the request of the National Union of Teachers, four representatives of the N.E.C., Messrs. A. A. Garrard, F. H. Harrod, P. H. Harrold, and E. A. S. Young, met representatives of the union to discuss the possibility of co-operation with the object of securing the same cost-of-living bonus for local government officers and teachers. It was agreed in principle that public officers should not be compelled to appeal to an arbitration tribunal designed for industry, but the N A L G O representatives were unable to suggest immediate action in view of the negotiations now in progress for strengthening the Whitley Council machinery. It was agreed, however, to explore the position further.

N A L G O's Future.—It was agreed to refer to the finance and general purposes committee consideration of the future policy and administration of the Association.

Regional Organisation.—Criticisms by the Bermondsey branch of the Regional organisation scheme were referred to the service conditions and organisation committee.

Bonus for Superannuated Officers.—It was reported that the Ministry of Health and the Secretary for Scotland had given a flat refusal to further representations for an increase in pensions of superannuated officers to meet the rise in the cost of living.

Local Elections and Register of Electors (Temporary Provisions) Acts, 1939-40.—It was reported that, despite further strong representations by Headquarters, the Home Secretary had refused to take any further steps to mitigate the hardship caused to local government officers who had suffered loss of remuneration as a result of the postponement of elections and of the preparation of the register of electors and jurors' books.

Proposed "Action Committee".—While expressing sympathy with officers who were deluged in an avalanche of government circulars and bound hand and foot in a torrent of red tape, the Council declined to consider a resolution of the North-Western and North Wales district committee urging it to consider the appointment of an "Action Committee," representative of all sections of local government to co-operate with government departments in the issue of instructions to local authorities and the public, with the object of restricting the issue of circulars, ensuring that the instructions were simple to understand and practical to operate, and reducing red tape.

National Women's Fund.—Another resolution from the North-Western and North Wales district committee, asking the Council to consider the desirability and possibility of inaugurating a "national Women's Fund for the purpose of providing an utility unit for one of His Majesty's Services," was referred to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund Committee, with a request that it consider ways in which women members might make a special effort.

National Council for Civil Liberties.—A letter from this body, inviting N A L G O affiliation, was referred to the finance and general purposes committee.

Cost-of-Living Bonus.—Miss I. Stansfield moved the reference back of an item in a report of the staff joint committee rejecting an

NALGO's own plans for national social security insurance, published on the preceding page lend special interest to this account of the remarkable social security scheme now in operation in New Zealand. The account—an outline only—has been prepared by F. B. MATTHEWS, public assistance officer to the Lindsey County Council.

THE New Zealand scheme of social insurance and assistance came into force on April 1, 1939, in accordance with the terms of the Social Security Act, 1939. That Act runs into 141 sections, and thus includes a mass of detail which it is impossible to mention in a brief summary. This account, however, does, I believe, present a fair general outline of the scheme.

Since preparing it I have received the report of the New Zealand Social Security Department for 1941. This reveals that the Act has operated successfully and that experience in its working has required only slight amendments, which were incorporated in an amending Act of 1940.

The scheme is a national one, administered through a Social Security Department, the three principal officers of which constitute the Social Security Commission.

Stated briefly, every ordinary resident of New Zealand over the age of 16 pays to the State a social security contribution which, in certain circumstances, entitles him to benefit irrespective of his income and, in other circumstances, to benefits which are calculated after taking into account certain sources of income enjoyed or capital possessed. Conditions have to be fulfilled before some types of benefits become payable, and there are provisions designed to prevent a person from

(Continued from preceding column)

application by the staff side that, in granting to the Association's staff the cost of living bonus award of the National Whitley Council, women should be paid the same bonus as men. This was defeated, however, the Council taking the view that, though it regretted the sex-differentiation imposed in the bonus award, it was bound to honour the award and not to depart from the principles of joint negotiation.

Lending Library.—Following a report by the general secretary that applications for the loan of books from the students' lending library, had increased, especially from members in the Forces eager to continue their studies but unable to buy books, the Council agreed to the expenditure of £60 on new books, subject to the approval of the education committee.

Honorary Members.—It was agreed to recommend to the next conference that Mr. J. T. Baker, lately chairman of the Building Society Committee of Management, and Mr. T. Freeman, lately chairman of the finance and general purposes committee, both of whom resigned recently on retirement from the service, be made honorary members.

Resignations.—The resignation from the Council of Mr. J. W. Vince was received with regret.

Mr. F. H. Harrod, who was re-elected chairman of the Council for the ensuing year, presided, and at the opening of the proceedings paid a warm tribute to the kindly and sympathetic way in which Mr. C. A. W. Roberts, senior vice-president, had presided over a difficult Conference. Mr. Roberts, replying, assured the Council that he had thoroughly enjoyed Conference. Those present included:

Messrs. R. Adams, H. Allen, H. J. Alton, W. R. Beavers, L. Bevan, J. Brown, S. H. Brodie, A. G. Bolton, J. Chaston, A. Clark, F. E. Cox, E. R. Davies, Miss E. Dawson.

Messrs. A. B. Day, W. O. Dodd, J. Y. Fawcett, G. S. Fraser, A. A. Garrard, P. H. Harrold, J. L. Holland, W. E. Hudson, H. R. Jones, H. A. Jury, G. Llewelyn, S. Lord, E. H. Mason, A. B. Mills, T. Nolan, A. Pinches, E. L. Riley, C. A. W. Roberts, H. Russell, F. Sharpe, R. T. Shears, Miss I. Stansfield.

Messrs. W. Strother, H. Taylor, L. H. Taylor, J. H. Tyrrell, J. H. Warren, R. Williams, and E. A. S. Young.

drawing more than one benefit at the same time, and for protecting the State funds.

The contribution which must be paid by everyone over 16 is in two parts:

(1) A registration fee of £1 a year for a man over 20 and of 5s. a year for all other contributors; and

(2) A charge of 1d. for each £s. 8d. or part thereof of salaries, wages, and other income—i.e., 5 per cent of income.

The monetary benefits may be divided broadly into three parts, viz.:

1. Benefits payable as a right, without regard to income.—These include superannuation, ranging from £10 to £78 a year (the amount depending on the period of insurance) and payable, subject to certain conditions, at the age of 65.

2. Benefits subject to an income test.—These, which are payable to dependants as well as to beneficiaries, may be reduced in proportion to the amount of certain classes of income enjoyed by a beneficiary or his dependants. Reductions are also made at a fractional rate in respect of the capital value of accumulated property, except property such as land, mortgages, annuities, life insurances and furniture. The types of benefit granted include:

Old Age Pensions.—Payable at 60 to beneficiaries who comply with certain conditions with regard to residence and character, and who have not deserted spouse or children. Superannuation benefit is deemed to form part of the pension.

Widows' Pensions.—Subject, in the case of women under 50, to conditions as to duration of marriage and the birth of children; and in the case of women over 50, to conditions relating to duration of marriage. Additional benefits are payable in respect of children. Benefits are also payable in certain circumstances to deserted women with children, and to wives of mental patients who have children.

Benefits for Orphans.—Payable in respect of orphans not maintained in a State institution, and subject to conditions relating to the birth of the child in New Zealand, or the residence of the parents in New Zealand.

Family Allowances.—Payable, subject to conditions, to the father or mother of two or more children. The payment is at a basic rate in respect of each child in excess of one. Reductions are not made according to income, but the applicant's income and family benefit must not exceed a certain maximum.

Invalids' Benefits.—Payable to the totally blind, and to persons who are permanently incapacitated as the result of accident, illness, or congenital defect. Additional benefits and vocational training are provided for the blind.

Miners' Benefits.—Payable to miners suffering from miners' phthisis or other occupational diseases which permanently and totally incapacitate them for work. The miner's own benefit is not subject to reduction on account of income, but benefits payable in respect of dependants are.

Sickness or Accident Benefits.—Payable to persons temporarily incapacitated for work through sickness or accident, and who thereby suffer a loss of salary, wages, or other earnings.

Unemployment Benefits.—Payable to unemployed persons capable and willing to undertake suitable work, irrespective of previous occupation or lack of occupation.

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BRANCHES' VIEWS ON RECONSTRUCTION 165

The interest taken by NALGO branches, district committees, and individual members in the work of the Reconstruction Committee has been one of the most heartening factors in the recent history of the Association. It shows that, despite intense preoccupation with official and voluntary work, despite the many calls made by the war upon time and thought, members are still eager and able to think of the future and to plan for a "New Order" that will be better than the old. The article below indicates some of the lines along which that thought and planning is developing.

AT the time of writing, nineteen branches had sent in replies to the questionnaire prepared by the Reconstruction Committee and published in the April number of LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE. Many more are still considering the questionnaire, and this summary of the replies received is, therefore, no more than an interim report. It is also an incomplete report. Space, unfortunately, does not permit of the publication of anything like a comprehensive review of the many opinions and proposals advanced. The most we can do is to indicate, shortly and roughly, the main trends of the views submitted. It is probable in such a summary that the necessary condensation will distort arguments, ignore interesting proposals, over-emphasise or under-emphasise conclusions. If that has happened here, we apologise in advance—while assuring those concerned that their views are being presented without such distortion to the Reconstruction Committee to which they were addressed.

One further explanation is necessary. For convenience, views have been attributed to the branches submitting them. In fact, of course, the branch as a whole is unlikely to have had any share in their preparation and should not, therefore, be held responsible for them. As a rule, they have been prepared by several sub-committees set up for the purpose, and thus represent the views of the members of those sub-committees only. And, in some cases, the sub-committees themselves have been unable to agree on their conclusions and have sent in majority and minority reports, or even a series of independent and individual reports. All such replies are being considered by the Reconstruction Committee, which welcomes the views of members, however expressed. Only by getting as wide a range of opinion as

possible can it hope to obtain a complete picture of the feeling within the service on the problems it is considering.

Readers will remember that the questionnaire dealt solely with local government structure. What, it asked, were the principal defects in that structure today and what changes, if any, were needed to equip it to meet the tasks and problems of the future? In other words, is the present set-up of county councils, county boroughs, metropolitan boroughs, non-county boroughs, and urban and rural districts, adequate and efficient, or should it be amended in any particular?

Luckily, the nineteen replies now under consideration provide a pretty fair cross-section of the various types of authority. They include two county councils, Cambridgeshire and Mid-Surrey; eight county boroughs, Coventry, Croydon, Darlington, Halifax, Leicester, St. Helens, South Shields, and West Ham; four non-county boroughs, Bilton, Gillingham, Malden and Coombe, and one which wishes to be anonymous; one metropolitan borough, Camberwell; two urban districts, Bognor Regis and Spennborough; and one rural district, Sheppen. Some of these branches, however, include other authorities, and if these are reckoned the number of urban districts is increased to eight and the number of rural districts to six.

Three Main Conclusions

While the views expressed cover a wide range of ground and convey a variety of opinion and proposal that defies simple tabulation, certain outstanding conclusions emerge upon which agreement is general.

1. Reform of local government structure is essential.

Of the nineteen branches, only one (Uxbridge) considered the present system satisfactory—and even it admitted anomalies which should be removed by the more extensive use of the existing machinery for "eliminating inefficient or redundant authorities and securing reorganisation and more equitable distribution of financial burdens."

Admission of the need for reform is not, of course, equivalent to a wholesale condemnation of the present system. Though not all the critics say so in as many words, most, one feels, would agree that, today, local government services are, for the most part, efficiently performed. What they do feel is that a simpler and more logical structure, together with consolidated legislation, would enable local authorities and their staffs to work still more efficiently.

This point is well illustrated by Bognor Regis, which, after declaring that it was not convinced that local government was inefficient, went on to present a most radical scheme for its reconstruction!

2. Democratic control must be maintained.

This is a fundamental axiom upon which all are agreed. It is well expressed in Gillingham's comment:

"The fundamental issue in any plan of reconstruction is whether efficiency, or the extension of democracy, shall be the ultimate aim . . . although efficiency is desirable, when it is obtained at the expense of democracy it is based on false foundations and is, in the long run, retrogressive."

3. Reform must be directed towards five primary objectives:

Elimination of overlapping and complication;

Freedom from controls which are hampering and unnecessary;

Imposition of controls where freedom is harmful;

Combating of ignorance and apathy; and

Financial rationalisation.

While these five objectives summarise in broad outline the conclusions emerging from the replies, there were, of course, many divergencies of view on the nature both of the objective and of the means of reaching it. Some of these are summarised below.

(a) **Local Government Structure**—The fundamental question is, of course, the types of local authority necessary for full efficiency and the extent of the powers each should exercise. On this, the greatest measure of support was given to the proposal that the existing six types of local authority should be reduced to two only (excluding central government), by the elimination and absorption of small and inefficient units and their replacement by a single type of primary authority, equivalent to the present county borough (though subdivided where necessary into district or ward committees), with equal powers throughout the country, and subject to the co-ordinating and directing power of an elected regional authority.

Branches suggesting this scheme or a variant of it were:

Bilton, Coventry,
Bognor Regis, Gillingham,
Camberwell, Sheppen, Rural,
Spennborough (Group B).

It was generally agreed that the primary authority should be big enough to provide most services efficiently and to employ well-qualified officers; the population figures suggested ranged from a minimum of 80,000 to a maximum of 200,000. Areas must be dependent on topographical and sociological factors.

The area of the regional authorities should be based on similar considerations, for which, however, hard and fast rules could not be laid down. It was, of course, realised that some of the biggest cities would have to remain outside the general rule.

Rural and Urban

Opinion was divided on the question whether primary authorities should be segregated into rural and urban units (but with equal powers) or whether, as far as feasible, rural areas should be incorporated with urban areas.

Bilton, Bognor, Gillingham, Leicester and St. Helens suggested the amalgamation of rural and urban areas; Camberwell implied something approaching such amalgamation in its suggestion that the bigger urban authorities should each include a surrounding rural area for urban use and development, while rural authorities should embrace towns not exceeding 30,000 population; Coventry and Cambridgeshire opposed any amalgamation of urban and rural; while Darlington suggested the creation of a type of authority which might be wholly urban, wholly rural, or composed of both urban and rural elements.

Even more extreme changes in structure were proposed by Leicester and by Spennborough (Group C). Both suggested one type of local authority only, with full powers, and having direct contact with the central government, without any intervening regional authority, though the Spennborough group would have Regional Planning Committees with a co-ordinating function.

Suggestions for the location of powers went all the way from charging the local authority with the administration of "all services now under public control" (Halifax),

(Continued from preceding page)

3. Benefits payable entirely at the discretion of the Social Security Commission.—In this class are included all persons who are not entitled to any of the specific benefits outlined above, and who "by reason of age or of physical or mental disability, or of domestic circumstances, or for any other reason, are unable to earn a sufficient livelihood for themselves and their dependants (if any)."

In making a payment to persons in this "residual" class, the Commission may attach conditions, such as that the applicant should undergo a course of training in any occupation, or should submit himself for examination at any medical or psychological clinic, or should receive any medical or other treatment, or should undergo any course of training for the improvement of his physical or mental capacities, or should do any work required of him.

In addition to these monetary benefits, the social security contribution entitles the contributor who fulfils the necessary conditions to: Medical benefits—i.e., free medical attendance; Medicine, drugs, appliances, etc.; Hospital benefits—i.e., contributions towards the cost of treatment in a hospital or nursing home; and Maternity benefits—i.e., contributions towards the cost of treatment, fees of midwives and nurses, etc.

These additional benefits are administered by the Ministry of Health, not by the Social Security Department.

to leaving it no more than sanitation and entertainments (Bognor Regis).

Most groups, however, thought that public utilities (supply) should be in the hands of a larger authority, and Bilston, Bognor Regis, Camberwell, Coventry, Gillingham, Malden and Coombe, St. Helens, Sheppey Rural, and Spenborough (Group A) designated that authority as Regional. Nor were there many dissentients to the view that specialist services, such as hospitals, higher education, and those services necessarily requiring a large area for efficient functioning and financing, such as main highways, main drainage, river conservation, police services, and town and country planning should be taken out of the hands of the local authorities and controlled by some wider authority—usually a regional council, but in the view of some by a joint board or other co-ordinating body, or, according to the Spenborough group, by the central government.

For other services, the general view was that, while broad lines of policy should be laid down by the regional authority, administration could and should be left in the hands of the local authority.

An interesting suggestion came from South Shields—that there should be a national central advisory body composed of representatives of local authorities and of officials and government departments. Gillingham was on similar lines in suggesting a federation of Regional Authorities to formulate general policy, supervise regional authorities and be responsible for planning and siting of industry.

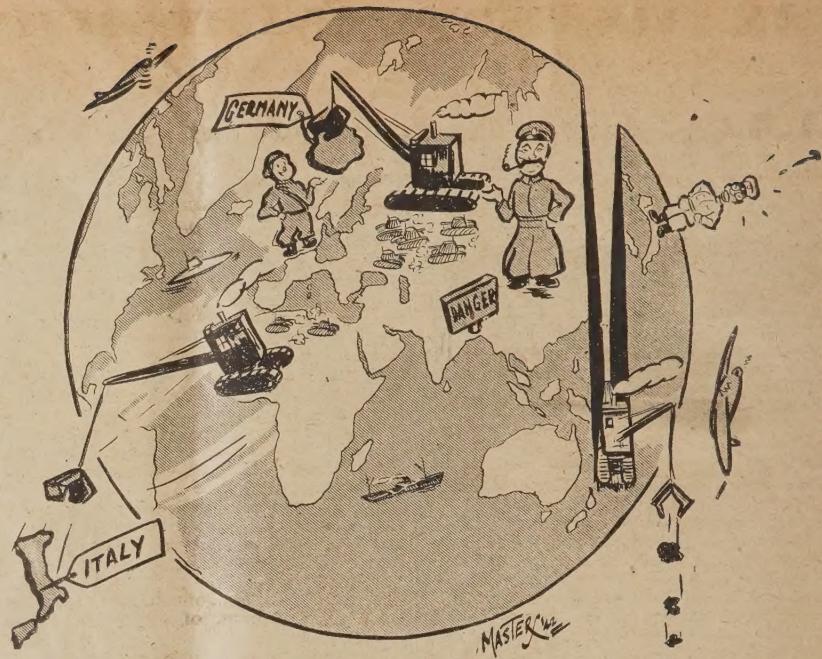
A Regional Council

On more radical lines was Camberwell's interesting proposal for a Regional Body composed of two parts—a Regional Assembly made up of full-time salaried representatives appointed by local authorities, and a Regional Council composed of the members of Parliament for the region and an equal number of representatives of the Regional Assembly. This Council would act as a "Cabinet" for the region, reviewing all services, planning the area, supervising and administering national services within it, and acting as a link between the local authorities and the central Government. Regional officers of Government departments would attend meetings of the Regional Council—a step which, it is claimed, would free the departments of much detail work and enable them to concentrate on long-term planning.

(b) **Arousing public interest.**—This problem received a good deal of attention in all but two of the replies. Most branches considered that civic education should hold an important place in school curricula, some urging that it should be compulsory.

Camberwell and Cambridgeshire made interesting suggestions for fostering public interest and securing closer contact between the authority and the public.

"Each town and country council," wrote Camberwell, "should be compelled to submit to the Region plans for the setting up of a community centre in each area . . . the main object would be to bring together all sections of the electorate in order to stimulate interest in the functions of, and services rendered by, local councils, to continue that interest when stimulated, and at the same time to provide a means by which, between elections, the civic voice could be heard from time to time." Such a centre, Camberwell suggested, should also be fully provided with all the necessary amenities for local activities, such as dramatic and musical societies. There is much to be said in favour of such a close association of recreational and civic facilities, for each would undoubtedly help to stimulate interest in the other, and it would be possible to bring civic affairs to the notice of the members of the



The Borough Engineer solves the problem of World Peace.

With acknowledgments to "The American City," from which the idea was cribbed.

public who might otherwise tend to neglect them. The Camberwell branch has dealt with this aspect thoroughly.

Camberwell's proposal was that ward advisory committees should be formed to focus public opinion on suggested developments of community service within the wards, and to manage local community centres.

(c) **Better Councillors.**—Several suggestions were made to improve the calibre of the elected representative. These included:

A compulsory test in local government administration for all candidates for election (Gillingham and one Spenborough group).

Courses in civics for councillors (Mid-Surrey); educational centres and selection panels for candidates (one Spenborough group).

Compulsory voting at elections (one Gillingham member, who felt that it would improve the quality of candidates as well as stimulate public interest);

Reduction in the number of councillors, possibly to one-third of the present total, to a maximum of 30 (Camberwell).

(d) **Party Politics.**—This problem is closely associated with those of public interest and democratic functioning. A number of branches would like to see local government freed from party control, and condemned the party caucus, and the group system operating within the party, as inimical to democratic government and preventing many councillors from giving the most useful service.

West Ham would like to see the main local authority committees open to press and public; and Bilston recommended that there should be restoration of the guild system, with representation by local trade and professional associations.

(e) **Better Officers.**—Several branches stressed the need for a higher standard of officer. This, they suggested, might be attained by educational opportunities, freer movement of staffs between authorities, and improved service conditions, with national standards of remuneration.

Malden and Coombe favoured lower retiring ages for officers and workmen. West Ham referred particularly to the need for more opportunity for juniors to continue their training during office hours. Several suggested

that reform of the financial sources and resources of local authorities should improve the calibre, status, and opportunities of officers.

(f) **Finance.**—No local government officer will need to be reminded of the difficulties and "trickiness" of this subject, and of its paramount influence on the standards of service. Nor is it surprising that "rating and financial difficulties" should take the leading place among the "obstacles to efficiency" cited in the replies.

It is naturally difficult for any but the expert to suggest practicable remedies, and most branches were cautious in their recommendations. But it is not necessary to be an expert to realise that something is wrong with the present system. Suggested reforms can be divided into two groups, the first leaving taxation as a responsibility of the primary authority, and the second transferring it to a larger authority (regional or national) which would levy, and possibly collect, the rate, distributing the proceeds among the primary authorities.

National taxation was supported by five branches—Bilston, Bognor Regis, Gillingham, Sheppey Rural, and South Shields—two of whom suggested in addition a local rate varying according to the needs of the district. Mid-Surrey and West Ham would like to see rates fixed on a national, or at least regional, basis, but collected by the local authority. Coventry suggested that the costs of each service should be spread over the area of the body dictating the policy, while Croydon deplored the present dependence for efficiency on local rateable values.

Three—Bognor Regis (one group), Malden and Coombe, and Spenborough (one group)—remained loyal to the present system of rating, with minor modifications, though one Bognor and one Spenborough group each favoured National taxation.

It is impossible in this brief account to do justice to the number of closely-integrated and well-thought-out schemes that have been sent in. They do, however, show clearly how much deep thought is being devoted to the problem, and provide an assurance that the service is wide awake to the need of its future development.

AN "ALL PURPOSES" AUTHORITY FOR EACH AREA

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A.M.C. Adopts Big Reconstruction Plan

Meeting in London on July 23, the Association of Municipal Corporations adopted a far-reaching plan for local government reconstruction which would involve the supersession of practically all existing local authorities by a single type of "all purposes" authority embracing both urban and rural areas. In view of its interest to all officers, we publish below a summary of the report of the committee which prepared the plan.

AN explanatory memorandum accompanying the report, while claiming that the present administration of local government by all types of authorities is of high repute, lists certain weaknesses in the system which will make it difficult to give full effect to post-war reconstruction and to make those changes and social conditions and amenities which the public will expect. These weaknesses are:

The large number of local authorities administering local government;

Diversity within a given area of authorities entitled to administer certain functions; The limited financial resources of some local authorities with the consequential restriction of the full development of adequate local social services, and the tendency to discourage employment of the best type of officer; The conflicting interests of the different classes of local authority within the same area, and the system of financial contributions between them.

The report itself opens with the definite recommendation that:

"Regional administration in the sense of a regional commissioner's organisation is no doubt required for emergency purposes in war time, but in our view it is neither necessary nor desirable as a peace-time organisation of local government."

There follows an analysis of the existing types of local authorities in urban and rural areas, and a brief account of the development of the present system. This, it is stated, "was substantially set up more than fifty years ago, and since that time the growth of population and the development of industry, accompanied by improved standards of living, have necessitated the introduction from time to time of new local government services or the extension of existing services. New duties have frequently been placed upon the existing authorities, and the choice of the authorities to undertake these duties has no doubt been determined more as a matter of convenience than of logic, and this has given rise to difficulties in administration. . . .

"It seems reasonable to expect that, after the war, the scope of local government services will be extended, in which case the present difficulties will tend to be intensified.

"The problem before the Association is to suggest a system of local government for the future which according to our views and experience is likely to be best suited to meet the needs of the country. . . .

"We think it desirable to state at the outset that, in our view, any scheme of reorganisation must preserve the essentials of local government. All forms of local government authority must continue to be democratic in constitution and in operation, and the elected representatives must retain effective control over the services for the provision and administration of which they are made responsible by Parliament.

"We also regard it as important that any local authorities of whatever kind should have direct access to the central departments of government without the intervention of regional or subsidiary government bodies. Much of the progress in existing social and local services in the country has been derived from local initiative and experiment—the

benefits of which have been subsequently incorporated into general legislation—and we regard it as of vital importance that this local initiative, which is the very foundation of local government, should be maintained unimpaired . . .

"We have considered the principles which should be followed in re-arranging the areas and functions of local authorities, and we think that it should be a matter of principle that each re-constituted area is such as to ensure:

The efficient administration of local government services for the well-being of the people;

That it is a unit economical and suitable for the administration of the public services allotted to it;

The specialisation of institutions where this would be advantageous as, for instance, in the case of hospitals, higher education establishments, etc.;

That the financial resources of the area are adequate to meet the reasonable expenditure of the authority without causing an undue financial burden upon the ratepayers while, at the same time, ensuring administrative and technical staffs of the calibre required;

That the services of suitable elected representatives from all sections of the community are attracted, and that there is a convenient and accessible administrative centre . . .

It is, therefore, recommended in the first place that this Association should support the principle that:

The most satisfactory form of local government in any area is that of a single authority invested with complete powers of local government, and that

Any reorganisation of local government should be directed to achieving the object of setting up as extensively as possible throughout the country, the type of authority referred to—which for convenience might be called a single all-purposes authority.

"This recommendation is made without reference to any particular local government authority, and what area would qualify as a single all-purposes authority is a matter for further consideration in the application of this principle.

"We have given much consideration to the area likely to be best suited for administration by a single all-purposes authority of the kind we have in mind. In reviewing the existing position we have felt that the differentiation between local government in urban areas and in rural areas which is characteristic of the present local government system has been carried too far. . . . In principle, there seems no reason why one form of authority should not extend to both urban and rural areas.

"The desirability of such a course lies in the fact that the rural areas of this country are not sufficiently self-supporting to provide all the local government services required without the assistance of the urban communities, and, as a result, rural areas do not normally enjoy the same highly developed services as an urban area. But it is clearly desirable that benefits of all local government services should be within the reach of all members of the community, irrespective of the nature of the area in which they reside.

"The burden of providing local government services in rural areas has always been the greatest difficulty in extending all services to such areas; Parliament has endeavoured to meet the position by the introduction of measures intended to reduce the burden, but it seems that the position would most effectively be met by a reorganisation on the basis of the establishment in suitable areas of a single all-purposes type of local government authority. . . .

"The area of such an authority is a matter which can only be determined after careful and detailed consideration, but we further recommend as a general principle that

The area of the authority should comprise both rural and urban lands, containing a well-balanced grouping of all classes in the social scale, and in which there is a reasonable spread of industry, commerce, residence, and agriculture, and which might reasonably be expected to attract men of experience and character, both as members of the local authority and as officers. . . .

"It is also considered essential that any new areas should be of such a character and status as to make them suitable units for the administration of any proposed scheme of post-war reconstruction or redevelopment, and in this respect the blending of rural or quasi-rural areas with an urban area as suggested is important and necessary. With the type of area proposed for the "all purposes authority," it should become possible for "overspills" from the urban into rural areas, with a consequent escape of financial responsibility, to be prevented. Further, by the limitation of space and appropriate town planning restrictions it should also be possible to limit the growth and population of each area, thus avoiding in the main the congestion and lack of amenities which at present exist in many areas.

"Further, it may be found that consideration will require to be given to the question as to whether special local government problems arise in those parts of the country where there are (a) vast tracts of rural lands and (b) large urban conurbations; in these cases, which will be limited in number, the course we have recommended may not be suitable and special provisions may be necessary. . . .

"If the recommendations which we make are accepted and sufficiently large units of administration are arranged, it is considered that *ad hoc* bodies for administration of particular services will be found generally to be unnecessary and superfluous to properly organised local government; such bodies and joint committees of local authorities are, as a broad generalisation, an undemocratic form of organisation to be avoided unless particular circumstances make it imperative.

"Public utilities should as a general statement, be owned and controlled by the public through the democratic forms of local government which, in effect, means that the undertakings at present owned by local authorities should be retained by them subject to general supervision through the appropriate Government Department whose duty it would be to secure the requisite degree of co-ordination and efficiency. Should it happen, in consequence, that the services area, or area of supply, extends outside the area of the owning authority into that of another, this should not be regarded as a predominant reason for altering the area of supply or for adjusting the area of the local authority. In appropriate cases, the system of bulk supply should exist; the function of generation (in the case of electricity and gas) or collection (in the case of water) might be separated from the function of distribution. These services may, in fact, by the course now recommended, be placed upon an approximation to a regional basis; "regional" in this case implying an area economical and efficient for the administration of such services."

MOVE TO SUPPLANT BELFAST CITY COUNCIL

English newspapers have reported only very briefly the revolutionary move by the Northern Ireland Parliament to supplant Belfast City Council by Government administrators, and in view of its interest we publish this account of the circumstances, specially written for "Local Government Service" by a Belfast correspondent.

AFTER three days' debate, the Northern Ireland House of Commons gave a second reading last month to the Belfast County Borough Administration Bill, which provides for the appointment of administrators to take over many of the principal functions of the corporation of sixty elected members.

The Bill does not dissolve the corporation, which is to be kept in being to determine policy. It so strips that body of administrative control, however, that one councillor, who is also a member of Parliament, caustically observed in the debate that it left them nothing but their robes!

Many members have threatened to resign, and four have already done so. The Government has promised the fullest consideration of amendments in the committee stage. Several of these embody alternative proposals acceptable to the majority of the council. If these do not go through, further resignations are likely, mostly from the official Unionists, the strongest political section in the council, who have been at loggerheads with the Ministry of Home Affairs for a long time.

If the Bill is passed, the administrators will exercise the functions of the council with respect to:

The appointment and removal of officers and servants, the fixing and regulation of their remuneration, and the distribution of the work of the council among them (subject to the reservation that appointments and removal of staff, and the fixing or alteration of their remuneration must have the approval of the Ministry).

Superannuation provisions.

The purchase of goods, supplies, machinery, plant, and other articles required by the departments and undertakings of the council.

The making of contracts for the execution of works required by the council;

The receipt and payment of moneys and banking arrangements;

The making, levying, collection, and recovery of the consolidated rate, and the levying, collection, and recovery of vehicle licence duties;

The raising of loans, issue and management of corporation stock and mortgages, investment of sinking funds, repayment of loans, and matters relating thereto;

Consultations with the War Damage Commission under Part 1 of the War Damage Act; and

Such other functions of the council as the Minister may from time to time, by order, confer upon the administrators.

In addition, the administrators may give to any officer or servant of the council such directions or instructions as they think fit, and may allocate the use of accommodation in civic buildings. The Bill provides for the seal of the corporation to be authenticated by the signatures of one or more of the administrators and of the town clerk or deputy town clerk. The administrators will not take over the functions of the committees in charge of the Belfast Mental Hospital, tuberculosis prevention, and schools management.

The council will continue to exercise its functions so far as the Act does not otherwise provide and subject to the provision that it will, in financial matters, be subject to the general control of the administrators and will not be permitted to adopt the estimates of expenditure for any local financial year without their approval.

The administrators may report to the Ministry respecting any act of the council, or failure of the council to take action, which, in their opinion is not in the interests of the ratepayers, and the Ministry, subject to the right of the council to submit observations, will have power to give such directions in the matter of the report as it thinks fit, any such directions being carried out by the administrators.

A long and troubled history lies behind this drastic legislation. In the main, it is a sequel to a prolonged inquiry over 18 months ago into the administration of Whiteabbey sanatorium under the tuberculosis committee of the council. There had been complaints concerning this institution from time to time. The council conducted at least one formal investigation on its own, and eventually asked the Home Ministry for an inquiry. After delays, the Home Ministry appointed two of its officers to hold the inquiry, but the council changed its mind and tendered no evidence, whereupon the inspectors adjourned the inquiry to make independent investigations. The ratepayers were startled by the disclosures in the report they eventually issued. It was revealed, *inter alia*, that of two tenders from the same firm for certain material, the higher had been accepted. A member of a sub-committee settling contracts was the principal of a firm supplying material.

The Ministry at once dissolved the tuberculosis committee and the sanatorium has since been managed by two commissioners. The Ministry recommended censure of two principal and other officers of the corporation and that the official stocktakers be not re-employed.

When the inspectors' report was received by

You can help save 10,000 lives a year!
By E. A. S. YOUNG, N.E.C., NALGO's representative on the London Council of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

LOCAL authorities are much in the position of the famous Farmer's Boy in these days, when so many new problems have to be solved and so much new action has to be taken.

While some of the tasks laid on the shoulders of local authorities are new, others are old ones complicated and made more serious by the circumstances of war. In this latter category is the road accident problem. Before the war it was a matter of grave concern, and much effort was made to reduce the dreadful totals of casualties associated with road usage.

When war came, and traffic was reduced, there were optimistic folk who imagined that the smaller number of vehicles on the roads would automatically bring down the accidents to such a small total that this problem, at any rate, could be put into cold storage until hostilities were over. Unfortunately, however, fact has contradicted prophecy. Before the war, the average road death roll was in the region of 6,500 a year. In the first war year, fatalities rose to 8,400, and in the second they touched the alarmingly high figure of more than 10,000. During the third year, there has been a welcome tendency towards reduction. In the first nine months, that is from the beginning of September to the end of May, there were 1,790 fewer deaths than in the corresponding period of the previous year.

Though this is to be welcomed, it cannot

be regarded with complacency. The figures are still substantially above pre-war level. Many of the victims are either Service personnel or workers in war industries, so that every time one of them has been killed or incapacitated it has meant interference with the effectiveness of the war effort. Fatalities to children have increased seriously, and in May of 1941 a new and dreadful record was set up, when 166 children were killed—an average of five a day. Obviously, then, the problem is serious. Quite apart from the humanitarian aspect, which is important, and the direct wastage of the lives of Service personnel and war workers, there is the dislocation caused by the accidents and the strain thrown on already overburdened public services.

Before the war, most local authorities had linked up in some way or other with the "Safety First" movement, which was formed in 1916 in London to direct and sustain educational publicity, aimed at securing greater public regard for road rules. In 1923, the movement was extended to embrace the whole nation and in the years between the wars had made itself a well-known and useful organisation. With the recent increase in fatalities, the functions of the movement have become even more important than before. The name of the organisation has been changed, because "Safety First" seemed a poor policy for a

nation battling with epic courage against a powerful foe, and is now the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents.

From the beginning, the society has endeavoured to put local activity in the forefront of its programme. This is not surprising, since its founder was Sir Herbert Blain, and as NALGO members well know, few men have a greater appreciation of the potentialities of the local government machine. It has been a basis of policy that, though centrally inspired and directed campaigns can achieve something, they cannot do so much as when supported by intensive and energetic local action. The society has more than 120 branches, all intimately associated with local authorities.

Last winter, when the Government was trying to reduce black-out dangers, it entrusted the society with the responsibility of arranging local activities. Funds were put at the society's disposal to enable grants to be made to localities embarking on activities to supplement the national scheme. Despite the pre-occupations of war, more than 240 centres assisted, and the result was a cumulative programme of great value. During the spring and summer, effort has been focussed on dangers to children.

The importance of propaganda on this subject is seen from the fact that one important approach to safety is almost in a position of suspended animation. Those programmes of road construction and repair which made highway departments so busy in peace-time are in the pigeon holes or among the plans for reconstructing Britain when the Hitlerite menace has passed. The police have not the man-power to give to traffic direction which once they had, and have many additional responsibilities in other directions. Consequently, we are forced more and more to propaganda as the most likely method of securing results.

Publicity of this kind needs its local machinery, and this can be given by the local authority. Spasmodic effort attains only flash-in-the-pan results, and a sustained policy is necessary. This can best be obtained when there is a properly organised local safety organisation. These exist in many centres. They inspire propaganda of various kinds. The very fact that they meet and discuss local accident problems, working on the statistics of their own districts, means publicity in the local press, always an excellent way of reaching the public mind.

Sometimes a crank will submit impossible ideas, but if the committee is rightly constituted and people with knowledge and enthusiasm sit on it, such difficulties can be quickly overcome. In the larger areas there are federations of Accident Prevention Councils. In London, for instance, the London Council is representative of the whole of the metropolitan police area and every local authority in that vast territory sends its representatives, with the result that the council is a real clearing house for information on all matters relating to accidents. Similar organisations exist in Scotland, Yorkshire, Lancashire, and the North Eastern counties.

Almost every branch of local authority administration is related in some way to the problem of accident prevention, with such departments as police, education, transport, and highways having the closest connection.

The society is anxious to have some link established in every area. In the bigger centres it feels that an active committee is needed, in some of the smaller districts it may only be an individual who will see that the posters which are provided are displayed effectively. Some definite local focus is however, essential. Local authority work is the bedrock of this organisation.

The aim of every enlightened local authority and of every local government officer is to provide for all citizens the means of living a fuller life. The prevention of needless and untimely deaths is an essential part of that work.

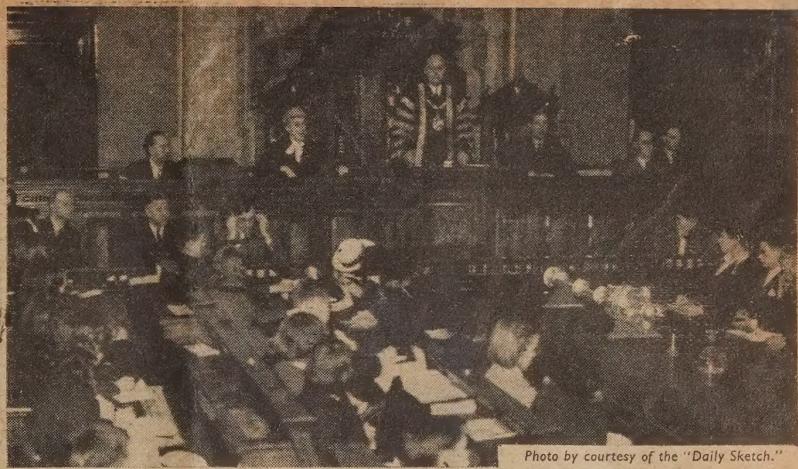


Photo by courtesy of the "Daily Sketch."

Training the Citizen of Tomorrow

The first meeting of a "Children's City Council," a novel experiment in civic education with great possibilities of fruitful development, is here described by F. A. J. RIVETT, M.Sc., Director of Education at Salford.

LOCAL authorities have, for some years, been disturbed by the apparent lack of interest in local government on the part of the electors and ratepayers—the very people who, by expressing their opinions clearly and freely, could assist in maintaining an efficient and lively local authority. This apathy is, perhaps, closely related to ignorance of the methods of local government. Many schools in the country have, for many years, shown a great deal of interest in local affairs. Local geography, local history, and local industry figure in the curriculum of every good school, for the citizen of the future is stunted and undeveloped if he is not aware of the part his district plays in the economy of the nation. Consciousness of the powers and duties of local and national government is developed also in the schools, under various titles—"civics" or "citizenship," or whatever it may be—and the same attitude that the school is part of the community and must partake of its life is revealed frequently in the treatment of many subjects.

Recently the mayor of Salford paid official visits to a number of the city schools and was interested to notice a lesson in citizenship proceeding in one school. He conceived the idea of children taking part in a city council of their own, and a scheme was worked out under his direction.

The scheme did not envisage children attending as spectators at a meeting of the city council. Such an idea is not new, and has been adopted in most parts of the country with a wide variety of result. The development was that children should attend in the council chamber to have a council of their own. All schools, secondary, and elementary, containing pupils over the age of 11 years, were invited to nominate a number of representatives proportionate to the size of the school, about 100 in all being selected. The nomination was made by the holding of elections in the schools, no candidates having a party "label," all being "independent." The schools then prepared lists of questions on various matters concerning local government to which they desired answers. The lists contained a large number of interesting points, covering such subjects as the method of election of mayor, aldermen, and councillors, and their respective powers and duties; wards; housing and slums; sewage disposal; secondary school fees; water supply, purification and cost; town planning; public assistance; the relations between the government and the local authority; the appointment of magistrates;

rates, estimates and expenditure; street naming; and gas and electricity co-ordination.

The first meeting of the Children's Council was held on June 30, 1942. Each child had a statement of the order of the proceedings, including a list of all the questions to be put. The mayor was in the chair, and was assisted by the town clerk, the city treasurer, and the director of education. After the mayor's introductory remarks, the children were called upon to put their questions, and the mayor or his officers replied. At the end of the meeting, a vote of thanks to the mayor was effectively proposed and seconded by two of the children and enthusiastically passed. Subsequently, a statement of proceedings enacted was circulated to all schools.

To those who are closely in touch with children to-day, it will not come as a surprise that the representatives were far from being overawed by the occasion, that their bearing was calm and their speech ready and fluent. An opportunity was taken immediately after the meeting to discuss privately with a few head teachers who were invited to be present, and with some of the children, what they themselves thought of it. All agreed that the Children's Council had made a most useful and successful start. The representatives had gained a great deal of knowledge of the organisation and direction of local government. They appreciated being brought closely in touch with the town hall, which will no longer appear quite so cold, official, and forbidding to them, for to sit where the civic fathers sit, and to see in the flesh those who dwell in Olympian heights, much attracted them.

It was already clear to the mayor and to those concerned with him in developing this experiment, that desirable and successful as was its method of initiation in the question and answer form, it could not remain restricted in this way, and this point also came out in discussion with the children's representatives and their teachers. Pleased as they were with the first occasion, the children were eager to participate more intimately still in the Children's Council meetings, and something more approaching discussion or debate is necessary. The Children's Council, is, of course, no place for the repetition of discussion on contentious matters of principle which the elders may be debating elsewhere, but there will undoubtedly prove to be a wide field of subjects which could be discussed fairly freely by the children, with value to them, and with interest and information to their civic leaders.

A Reply to Mr. Wilson

MR. NORMAN WILSON'S article in the June LOCAL GOVERNMENT SERVICE, written by one obviously out of touch with practical public assistance, must not be allowed to go unchallenged.

Mr. Wilson states that working people—presumably he means working-class people—bitterly dislike the poor law, and seeks to prove his assertion by declaring that 200,000 old people disliked it so much that they existed on 10s. a week pension rather than seek additional assistance. What a sweeping statement, and how wrong! Assuming the figure of 200,000 new applicants to be correct, it proves merely that this number were brought within the scope of state assistance because the new legislation provided more generous help than could be given under poor law. In itself, the new agency for furnishing this assistance afforded no attraction to the new beneficiaries. Had local authorities been empowered to apply the fresh conditions to poor law, they would have received the same number of new applications. In any case, it is nonsense to say that all these old folk formerly had 10s. weekly income only. Fifty thousand would be nearer the mark.

He goes on to say that unemployment insurance benefit scales were drawn at such a level as to be over poor law scales. Yet before the Assistance Board was created, hundreds of pounds were spent by public assistance authorities in supplementation of unemployment insurance benefit.

Continuing, Mr. Wilson further proclaims his ignorance of public assistance by declaring that when an unemployed man falls sick he sustains a lowering of an already low standard of living. This is not so. On the contrary, a man who in such circumstances applies for public assistance improves his finances, for not only does he receive relief on a scale comparable with unemployment insurance benefit, but 10s. 6d. of his national health insurance benefit is ignored in assessing his needs.

Next, we are told that old age pensioners are now treated as people who have given a lifetime of work to the community, and are entitled to be maintained as such by the community. A wonderful ideal, undoubtedly! And the State sets about fulfilling it by extending the already vast machinery established to deal with unemployed persons. It then proceeds to honour these worthy citizens by sending to them as its envoys its lowest paid, and so presumably least efficient, servants. And if one of these good people falls sick, or needs a truss or a surgical boot, this benevolent state department has to confess its incompleteness and refer the person concerned to the public assistance authority. Even in straightforward cases, the pensioner would often be in Queen Street but for the public assistance service, while in the offices of the Assistance Board the leisurely process goes on of investigating means, assessing need, issuing the order book, and awaiting the next normal pay day.

Then we come to the amazing statement that the Assistance Board is the appropriate machinery for providing for the welfare of sick persons. How can this be? The Assistance Board has no medical service, no hospitals, no sanatoria, no clinics. The only welfare service I have found it to consist of officers who look out for pensioners requiring medical or surgical treatment, and then transfer these worries to the local relieving officer.

Mr. Wilson declares that his plan to transfer temporarily sick cases to the Assistance Board would reduce materially the number of beneficiaries of public assistance. This would not be so, for I estimate that fewer than ten per cent of public assistance recipients would be affected.

The effort made to belittle public assistance by proving that free milk and school meals have shown relief to be inadequate does not hold water. The fact that public assistance committees have to take into account all income into a house, with certain statutory exceptions, does not mean that relief has to be reduced to exactly the amount of every increase in income. For instance, suppose the wage of a son of a relief recipient is increased by 5s. a week. No public assistance committee would

READERS' FORUM

Letters for the September journal must reach the Editor, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex, by Monday, August 17.

forthwith reduce relief by 5s., nor could anyone read into this negation an admission that the relief scale was too low before. So why argue that it is when a younger child acquires some added income for the family, and no reduction of relief is made?

In the last paragraph of this article of misstatements, Mr. Wilson declares that local authorities were delighted to be relieved of the responsibility of maintaining the able-bodied unemployed, and infers from this that they would be equally pleased to be relieved of the burden of the non-able-bodied unemployed. But local authorities were not delighted when the responsibility of maintaining able-bodied unemployed persons was taken from them. The transfer came about because many local authorities had felt their sense of duty and responsibility so much that rates soared until it became obvious that the Government had to do something to equalise the financial burden. It chose a national scheme and, as it was going to pay the piper, it had the right to call the tune. But the scheme was so repugnant to those most closely concerned that local authorities were asked to carry on their good work for the time necessary to break in the public to the new order. Mr. Wilson will not need reminding how near the Unemployment Assistance Board was to complete breakdown at that time.

Mr. Wilson's conclusions, strangely enough, provide food for thought. But I am sorry he did not get his facts right before writing the article.

H. ALCOCK.

"Ashfield," The Woodlands,
Belper, Derbyshire.

Welfare of Recipients

MR. WILSON'S article under the, it seems to me, unfortunate title of "Clear up the Chaos in Poor Law or Public Assistance," makes interesting reading, but surely this service has not failed to such a lamentable degree!

One feels, after reading the article, that the ogre of officialdom and repressive measures has not yet been slain, and that to clear this country of a blot in its social services there should be a transference to a Central Department. But can such a reorganisation be effected successfully without careful consideration of the likely repercussions? What are to be the effects on the social and moral welfare of the recipients—a problem of paramount importance?

When the Assistance Board was set up, recruitment to its service was open to all local authority officers in addition to civil servants. Had the Government desired to remove the stigma of public assistance, it should not have included in its new organisation officers who were steeped in the principles and practices which were abhorred. But the Government evidently was not convinced that a stigma did attach itself to public assistance, and was rightly prepared to admit to its service persons who had a deep knowledge of human needs.

The proportion of public assistance officials accepted by the Assistance Board may have had a sobering influence on the civil servants who were appointed as officers, for there are very few (if any) Government departments which are in close personal touch with the poor. Some, such as the Ministry of Labour, come into contact with them, but they do not extend their activities to include home visits and personal supervision of welfare. So it would seem that the Government may have realised its responsibility to the recipients on the question of welfare.

The next transfer from public assistance was of persons who would be entitled to supplementary pensions, and here again it was agreed to recruit public assistance officials. But whereas, on the inception of the Board, all officials were invited to apply, this time it was agreed to "take over" redundant officers. This term was interpreted to mean officers for whom no further use could be found after completion of the transfer, many of whom proved to be temporary clerks of short service—with the result that when the Board settled down after its second upheaval, it contained a proportion of experienced officers in grades of assistance officer and higher ranks, and a considerable number of short-service clerks acting as investigators. In an organisation of the size, and with the ramifications, of the Assistance Board, clerks must be appointed to contact recipients in their homes, but there are various methods of investigation and inquiry, and not all are right.

The welfare of the recipient is of vital importance, and I cannot accept the distinction drawn by Mr. Wilson when he states: "The duty of the Board is to provide for his welfare, and the duty of the public assistance authority is merely to relieve destitution." Experience has shown that in many cases the recipient has been "shuttled" from the Board to the public assistance authority because the regulations do not "quite" cover the case.

This comment is not intended as a criticism of a well-written article, nor as an objection to the suggestion for centralisation, but is merely a plea for greater importance to be attached to the welfare of the recipients who will be the subject of transfer. Section 35 (2), Unemployment Assistance Act, 1934, provided that: "The function of the Board shall be the assistance of persons . . . and the promotion of their welfare, and, in particular, the making of provision for the improvement and re-establishment of the condition of such persons with a view to their being in all respects fit for entry into or return to regular employment . . ." This is sufficient scope, but perhaps the driving force is not effective. A remedy would be to inflict upon officers of the Assistance Board a statutory responsibility to secure the appropriate treatment for applicants. A duty is laid upon public assistance officials by Section 17 of the Poor Law Act, 1930, and even though that duty may be merely to relieve destitution, that condition may have to be relieved in many ways.

239, Broadway, J. A. DENTON.
Chadderton, Lancs.

Mr. Norman Wilson writes: Mr. Alcock seems to be setting himself against the whole trend of development over the past thirty years. This has been towards the break-up of the poor law, because of the growing recognition that better methods of dealing with distressed members of the community are needed, and because of the stigma which attaches, with historical if not contemporary justification, to the receipt of assistance from it. The purpose of my article was to suggest ways in which this process of taking more and more classes of person outside its scope might be extended.

I am afraid that Mr. Alcock suspects me of a wholesale attack upon those (particularly the official staffs) who administer the poor law. This is not the case. It is not the case either that I think the creation of the Assistance Board

indeed, I pointed out some of the things which it does not do and which I think it should do. But the establishment of the Board, responsible very largely for the welfare of the long-term unemployed, was a stride in the right direction. It should extend its responsibility by providing where necessary for the financial needs of the sick unemployed; the public health authority, and not the public assistance authority or the Board, should be concerned with their medical needs.

Incidentally, I am not quite so out of touch with practical public assistance as Mr. Alcock imagines. Until recently I was for many years on the staff of a large public health department, where my work brought me into close association with the public assistance officer and his colleagues.

I am very glad that Mr. Alcock feels that the conclusions I drew provide food for thought, even though he disagrees with the arguments on which I base them.

I agree wholeheartedly with Mr. Denton as to the prime importance of the quality of investigating officers, since the welfare of applicants for assistance depends to a large extent on this being high. It is, I know, a matter of concern to district officers of the Board that they have had to take on to their staffs a number of people (ex-temporary P.A. clerks and others) with little training or experience.

And perhaps the Editor will not mind my saying that it was he and not I who furnished the article with its title!

AFFILIATION TO T.U.C. "A Political Movement"

THE Conference discussion on affiliation to the T.U.C. appears to have been lively, and, as you say in your editorial comments, the decision was unusual. But your report leads me to the conclusion that Mr. Harrod's appeal for a serious discussion on a basis of broad principle was largely ignored.

On the accusations of "prejudice," "recklessly partisan and misleading statements," "red herrings," and so forth, I can make no comment except a quotation from Kipling: "Only Satan can rebuke sin, the good don't know enough about it."

The question seems to me to boil down to answers to two main questions:

- (a) Is the T.U.C. a political movement?
- (b) Should NALGO be independent of political movements?

I feel that the answers to these questions are emphatically Yes, in both cases, and that, therefore, there is no case whatever for affiliation. I would, however, say that if the T.U.C. ceased to be a political body the case for affiliation would be overwhelming.

There is one question of principle which has not been raised at all, and which seems to me to be fundamental. It is whether it is in the best interests of the community as a whole that the T.U.C. should be political. A fascist (using that much misused term in its general sense) would say emphatically, Yes, because the association of trade unions with the party is essentially fascist. But thoughtful opinion is now coming to the conclusion that the close association of the trade union movement with the Labour party has been harmful to both bodies. The Labour party has hampered the development of the trade unions, and the latter have been an "Old Man of the Sea" on the back of the party.

It seems to me that affiliation would be a most retrograde step. NALGO has a great opportunity of showing the ideal of a trade union which, whilst considering fully the interests of its members, at the same time remembers its duty towards the community, and affiliation with the T.U.C. would destroy this opportunity completely while that body retains its present political associations.

"Lentworth," J. J. LEEMING,
Cumnor Hill, Oxford.

"Not a Political Movement"

IT is surprising and disappointing to learn that a vice-president of NALGO should be so lacking in knowledge of the T.U.C. movement and objects as to use the words attributed to him at Conference: "It is still a statement of fact, admitted by the T.U.C. itself, that it is a political movement."

This canard should be laid once and for all, and I have, therefore, been at pains to prove certain facts already known to many of us, but not apparently to Mr. Garrard:

WEEK-END SCHOOL ON RECONSTRUCTION

All local government reconstructors living within reach of London will have a fine opportunity to hear the views of experts and to express their own at a week-end school which has been arranged jointly by the Metropolitan Area Education Committee, the L.C.C. branch of NALGO, and the Institute of Public Administration at County Hall, London, S.E.1, on Saturday and Sunday, September 12 and 13. The programme will be:

Saturday Afternoon—Paper by Mr. G. D. H. Cole on "Reconstruction in the Civil and Municipal Services."

Saturday Evening—Open debate on the future of the official and voluntary worker in the social services.

Sunday Morning—Paper by Lady (Shena) Simon on Post-War Education Problems.

Mr. J. H. Warren, town clerk of Slough and chairman of the NALGO Reconstruction Committee, will preside.

In addition, the Institute of Public Administration has formed a discussion group, which is to meet at County Hall at 6.30 p.m. on Monday, August 10, and Monday, September 7. The subject for the first meeting is: "The place of the professional officer in public administration," and of the second: "Administration of services through public corporations."

No fee will be charged for attendance at either the week-end school or the discussion group, but members wishing to attend are asked to inform the secretary of the area education committee, A. E. Odell, by phone at RODney 3852, or by post to 59, Parkside Drive, Edgware, Middlesex, from whom further details can be obtained.

The T.U.C. is a purely industrial body which is quite unable to use its funds for political purposes.

It is not necessary for a union to adopt political rules to become affiliated to Congress. Many affiliated unions have no such rules.

Affiliation and other fees payable to Congress are payable from general funds of the affiliated union.

The T.U.C. has no power to require an affiliated organisation to strike. It does not interfere with the domestic affairs or the constitutions of affiliated organisations.

The assumption that affiliation to Congress involves strike action and support of other organisations is a bogey which is often raised by ill-informed opponents of the T.U.C. It is completely false.

The above four points are authoritative and unimpeachable and I am willing to maintain and prove them against Mr. Garrard and any other member of the N.E.C. or the Association who supports his reckless statement.

Leicester. J. HILL.

(Late hon. sec. Leicester City Branch.)

Mr. A. A. Garrard writes: *I am aware of all the facts cited by Mr. Hill and admit the accuracy of his four statements about the T.U.C. My argument that it is a political movement has nothing to do with political funds, political rules, or strike action, but is based on the objects of the T.U.C. These, as set out in its constitution, include, among many other parallel measures, "public ownership and control of natural resources and services," including nationalisation of land, mines, and minerals, and nationalisation of railways.*

These are political objects. They are the objects of the Labour Party. They can be attained only through political action, local and

national. I do not say that they are not desirable objects. But I do say that their inclusion in its constitution makes the T.U.C. a political movement, and associates it directly with one political party.

May I ask Mr. Hill two questions?

Can he name a leading member of the T.U.C. General Council who is not also a member or a public supporter of the Labour Party?

Can he name a leading member of the T.U.C. General Council who is a member or a public supporter of the Conservative or Liberal Parties?

Whether the T.U.C. is or is not legally affiliated to the Labour Party is immaterial. The point is that, in its actions and policy and in the eyes of the public, it is a political movement, openly supporting the policy of the Labour Party. And whatever disclaimers or reservations NALGO may make, whatever reliance it may place on the independence of the T.U.C., there can be no doubt whatever that, in the eyes of the Government, of local authorities, and of the public, its affiliation to the T.U.C. would link it definitely with the Labour Party. That is the only issue.

A WOMAN'S PRIVILEGE? Retort to "Jackass"

JACKASS must have his little jibe—and why not? But please let his victim be tried, in just and orderly fashion, by her peers.

COUNSEL FOR THE CROWN (perched upon the head of Mr. Jackass): At approximately 11.30 a.m. on the second day of Conference, the accused took advantage of being a woman for the purpose of exceeding, by two whole minutes, the three-minute time-limit for speeches.

COUNSEL FOR THE DEFENCE: The accused had endured one and a half days of no-time-limit speeches, whose subjects were in many cases far less important than her own (equal pay for equal work). Then the generous applause of her fellow-delegates encroached on the three short minutes which had been allotted to her. And so, not because she was a woman (she deprecates as much as anyone the Johnsonian attitude that one should be surprised, not that the dog dances well on his hind-legs, but that he does it at all!), but because of the admitted urgency of her subject, she did not think it unfair to take up a further two minutes of the delegates' precious, but much-abused time.

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Jury—what is your verdict?

Glasgow.

MARY HOWIE.

REVITALISE THE SERVICE Nationalisation, not Competition

IN his reply, in the July journal, to my letter published in June, Mr. G. W. Mason argues that local authorities should take over public utility undertakings from private enterprise.

I maintain that acquisition and control by Government departments would spread much more evenly the cost and the benefits of these services than would a patchwork of comparatively small undertakings in the hands of local councils.

I should be loth to believe that all temporary officers share Mr. Mason's contempt for the capabilities of permanent officers, especially as the vast majority of "temporaries" owe their jobs to a large number of permanent officers being engaged on rather more dangerous duties. Defence of others, including Mr. Mason, in places far remote, give many of these permanent officers no opportunity of self-defence against the attacks of the "Mr. Masons" of the local Government service.

CLIFFORD R. HOLLIS,
(L.-Sgt. Royal Armoured Corps).

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Military

KILLED
 Bradshaw, Sgt.-Pilot S. W., A.R.I.B.A., R.A.F., engineers' dept., Bromley, Kent.
 Brown, E. S., Merton, and Morden.
 Brown, Sub-Lt. L. C., R.N.V.R., treasurer's dept., Gloucester.
 Brown, Sgt.-Pilot P., R.A.F., Gloucester C.C.
 Deacon, Sgt.-Pilot V., R.A.F.V.R., 21, clerk's dept., Bournemouth.
 Edwards, Lt.-Cmrd. R. B., D.S.O., R.N., baths superintendent, Crewe. Lt.-Cmrd. Edwards was awarded the D.S.O. for outstanding heroism in dismantling live mines washed up on the coast. He was killed on duty and was buried at sea with naval honours.
 *Follow, Sgt.-Pilot L. N., R.A.F., health dept., Coventry.
 Fox, L.A/C J. A., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Kingston-on-Thames.
 *Gowan, Sgt. (W/O A.G.), T. D., R.A.F. health dept. (isolation hospital), Leicester.

Heroes of the Battle

The latest total of NALGO-members who have laid down their lives are enduring captivity, or have gained awards for heroism in the fight for freedom are:

Military	Civilian
Killed 370	Killed 56
Missing 255	Decorated 102
Prisoners 215	
Decorated 80	

Harrison, A. B., K. H., R.N., 22, electricity dept., Heckmondwike.
 Head, Sgn., J. M., R.C.S., relieving officer, Croydon.
 Hocking, Tpr. R. F., 28, treasurer's dept., Harrow (in Libya).
 Lee, Sgt.-Pilot A. H., R.A.F., Central Middlesex county hospital.
 Little, A. G., R.C.S., electricity dept., Bromley, Kent.
 Lock, Sgt. C. F., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Middlesex.
 Maskell, Gnr. R. G., R.A., 23, electricity dept., Epsom and Ewell (in Middle East).
 Miller, Flt.-Sgt. Obs. G., R.A.F.V.R., town chamberlain's dept., Hamilton.
 *Newton, R. E., R.A.F., Coventry (in raid on Germany).
 Stratton, Sgt. M. A., R.A.F., rating and valuation office, Heston and Isleworth.

MISSING

Addis, Pilot-Offr. R. G., taxation office, Worcester.
 Anderson, Pte. J. C., R.A.O.C., health dept., Wolverhampton (in Malaya).
 Beckett, Gnr. C. D., R.A., treasurer's (rating) dept., Leicester (at Singapore).
 Benton, L.Cpl. H. W., R.C.S., clerk's dept., Wolverhampton (in Malaya).
 Broadbent, Sgt. H., D.F.M., R.A.F., Oldham (from Bomber Command operations).
 Burch, Gnr. F., R.A., public assistance dept., Croydon.
 Clark, L.Bdr. K. C., surveyor's dept., Clacton (in Libya).
 Cole, F.Cpl. L. W., Military Police, clerk's dept., Chelmsford (in Malaya).
 Hardcastle, Sgt. F., surveyor's dept., Worsborough U.D. (Barnsley Branch) (in Malaya).
 Hartley, Lt. J. W., R.E., surveyor's dept., Burnley R.D. (presumed prisoner).
 Henworth, Sgt. J., R.A.S.C., public assistance dept., Walsall.
 Lynch, Sgn. A., R.C.S., Napsbury hospital, Middlesex (in Malaya).
 Mitchell, Pilot-Offr. F. A., treasurer's dept., Woolwich.
 Parker, Sgt. C. M., R.A.F., libraries dept., Oldham (from Bomber Command operations).
 Poole, Sgt.-Obs. G., R.A.F., public assistance dept., Walsall.
 Richards, D. A., R.T.C., electricity dept., Bristol (in Libya).
 Ringham, Sgt. (W.O.) F., R.A.F., health dept., Kent C.C. (from raid over Germany).
 Rowse, Pte. F. A., education dept., Croydon.
 Smith, Sgt. Pilot E. C., R.A.F., housing section, Wandsworth.
 Smith, Sgt.-Obs. W. A., R.A.F., town planning dept., Worcester C.C.
 Still, L.Cpl. N. R.E., engineer's dept., Bournemouth (in Malaya).
 Summers, Sgt.-Obs. G. J., R.A.F., rating dept., Minehead (in Libya).
 Syrum, Sgt. L. A., R.A.F., Gloucester C.C. (in Middle East).
 Thompson, Capt. G. O., R.E., engineer's dept., Newcastle-upon-Tyne (in Middle East).
 Thompson, Sgt.-Pilot R. T., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Kingston-upon-Thames.
 Watling, Sgt. L. G., R.A.F., 25, accountancy assistant, Essex Rivers Catchment Board (in Egypt).
 Watson, O. Coder R., electricity dept., Colne (in Singapore).
 Whittemore, Sgt.-Pilot M., R.A.F., electricity dept., Bromley, Kent.
 Wilkes, A.B. F. C., R.N., treasurer's dept., Wolverhampton (presumed killed).
 Woods, L.Cpl. F. B., R.A.S.C., Cuckfield (in Malaya).

PRISONERS OF WAR

Bateman, Pilot-Offr. A. B., R.A.F., clerk's dept., Heston and Isleworth.
 Fely, Pte. P., R.A.S.C., rating dept., Horichurch (in Far East).
 Foden, 2/Lt. P., R.H.A., 25, clerk's dept., Brentford and Chiswick (in Italy).
 Henson, Tpr. R. L., 21, treasurer's dept., Harrow (taken

in Libya and reported by Vatican City radio to be in hospital near Naples).

Pescod, Pte. J., R.A.M.C., Middlesex Colony (in Italy).
 Rogers, L/Cpl. N. H., Royal Armoured Corps, audit dept., Croydon and former public relations correspondent, Croydon and editor of "Calling Croydon" (in Middle East).

Tomlinson, Pte. F. D., R.A.M.C., gas dept., Walsall.
 *Williams, Pilot-Offr. H. A., D.F.M., R.A.F., treasurer's dept., Dudley.

*Previously reported missing.

Awards to Members

D.F.C.

Bowman, Flt.-Lt. H., R.A.F. highways dept., Ilford.
 Thomas, Squadron-Ldr. R. M., R.A.F., assistant relieving officer, Wiltshire C.C. Official announcement states: "This officer is a Squadron Commander of

outstanding merit. He has participated in a large number of sorties against the enemy with success. During the period he has acted as Flight or Squadron Commander his unit has destroyed at least 17 hostile aircraft. Squadron-Ldr. Thomas has at all times displayed great skill, sound judgment, and reliability."

D.F.M.

Stillwell, Flt.-Sgt. R. L., R.A.F., 22, clerk's dept., Paddington. Official announcement states: "This airman is a fine leader, and an inspiration to his Squadron. Since August, 1940, he has been engaged on active operations, and has taken part in many sorties over enemy occupied territory, during which he has destroyed one enemy aircraft, and has damaged others. In August, 1941, he reported the exact position of an R.A.F. bomber crew, whom he had sighted on the sea, fifteen miles off the Dutch coast. The information he gave was responsible for their final rescue. In April, 1942, when returning from a sweep, he sighted a pilot in the sea without a dinghy, and, although Flt.-Sgt. Stillwell was short of fuel, he succeeded in dropping his own dinghy within 25 yards of the spot. Unfortunately, the pilot was afterwards found to be dead."

HOSPITALITY FOR WARRIOR

The Metropolitan district committee has set an example to all other districts by being the first to appoint a liaison officer to organise hospitality for members in the Forces in the area. He is Mr. PERCIVAL W. BOND, of the council offices, Purley, Surrey, and he is appealing for the co-operation of all other members of the district committee and of all branch secretaries in the Metropolitan area. Mr. Bond is also anxious to get in touch with liaison officers appointed by other districts, with a view to preparing a scheme whereby members in the Forces can be supplied with details of the hospitality available in each area. What about it, district committees?

In the meantime, the following is an up-to-date list of the branches and individual members offering hospitality:

BRANCHES

Action.—Miss J. PERGARDE, Town Hall, W.3 (ACORN 3322).

Ashton-under-Lyne.—W. B. BRADLEY, electricity works (use of Waterworks Social Club offered).

Aylesbury.—Bucks county NALGO Sports and Social Club.—G. A. MELLOR, County Hall.

Barking.—R. A. BROWN, Town Hall Annex.

Barnsley.—T. S. FARNSWORTH, Treasurer's Dept., Town Hall (Barnsley 3232).

Blackburn.—NALGO Sports and Social Club.—J. COX, 42, Victoria Street.

Bognor Regis.—A. C. TWORT, Town Hall, (Bognor Regis 1660).

Burnley.—Greenhill Club, 163a, Manchester Road (billiards, bowls, cards, darts).—J. M. HOLT, Education Offices, Manchester Road.

Cambridgeshire.—LEO MASON, Shire Hall.

Canterbury.—J. E. NEWPORT, Municipal Buildings, Dane John (Canterbury 2826).

Chelmsford.—L. E. INNES, Essex Rivers Catchment Board, Essex Rivers House, Springfield Road,

Cheshire County.—H. JONES, 47, Walter St., Chester.

Cleckheaton (Spenborough branch).—F. NORMINGTON, electricity works (Cleckheaton 16).

Colchester.—A. E. GODBOLD, Town Hall.

Croydon.—A. E. ALLEN, Public Assistance Dept., Mayday Road, Thornton Heath (CROYDON 4433, Mayday Switchboard, Ext. 122).

Dudley, Worcs.—S. N. COLYER, Sedgley Emergency Hospital, Burton Road (Dudley 2243).

Erith.—D. H. E. HOCKLEY, Council Offices.

Gillingham.—H. KING, Municipal Buildings.

Glasgow.—Members are invited to avail themselves of the catering and other facilities of the Allies Canteen, 166, Argyle Street (corner of Union Street), as guests of the branch and are asked to sign the autograph book.

Grimsby.—J. W. L. BUXTON, Treasurer's Dept., Mun. Bldgs, Town Hall Square (Grimsby 55141).

Hinckley, Leicestershire.—J. S. TOMKINS, 16, Station Road.

Hornchurch.—D. H. ELLES, Council Offices, Billet Lane (Hornchurch 3434).

Hounslow.—Heston & Isleworth staff sports club, 129, Hanworth Road, Hounslow (bar, billiards, table tennis, etc.), offers temporary membership. Apply: Hon. Sec., B. F. EMMERSON, Council House, Hounslow.

Hucknall.—E. H. ADAMS, Health Dept., Watnall Rd.

Hull.—E. F. FOSTER, Treasurer's Dept., Guildhall (Hull 36880).

Ipswich.—Miss E. M. DEDE, Social Welfare Dept., 19, Tower Street (Ipswich 2208).

Isle of Wight.—S. H. MATTHEWS, County Hall, Newport, I.O.W.

Kirkby-in-Ashfield.—L. H. JAMES, Gas Dept., Urban Road.

Leicester.—S. DAWSON, Transport Dept., Abbey Park Road.

Lincoln.—Lindsey County officers hold a monthly social

Particulars from secretary, NALGO, County Offices.

Liverpool.—W. HART, 22, Duchy Chambers, Sir Thomas Street (Bank 487).

Maidstone.—Miss B. W. SOLOMON, Room 226, County Hall.

March, Cambs.—C. F. BOTTERELL, County Hall, Morley (Leeds).—N. WRIGHT, Education Offices, Queen Street.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—V. GRAINGER, Town Hall.

Newton-le-Willows, Lancs.—E. W. BUSHELL, Latham House, Cross Lane.

Maidstone.—Miss B. W. SOLOMON, Room 226, County Hall.

March, Cambs.—C. F. BOTTERELL, County Hall, Morley (Leeds).—N. WRIGHT, Education Offices, Queen Street.

Newcastle-upon-Tyne.—V. GRAINGER, Town Hall.

Newton-le-Willows, Lancs.—E. W. BUSHELL, Latham House, Cross Lane.

Orpington.—R. H. JORDAN, Council Offices, 46, Bark Hard Road, or (home) 255, Court Road.

Paddington.—Bowling and Sports Club, Castellain Road/ Maida Vale (bowling, tennis, table-tennis, billiards, darts, cards).—T. F. DUNNING, Town Hall (PADDINGTON 7672).

Penarth, Glam.—J. THOMAS, 19, Albert Road.

Reading.—J. H. SOWDEN HALL, Weights and Measures Dept., Field Road (Reading 4190).

Rochdale.—Municipal Officers' Club, Toad Lane (billiards, table-tennis, darts, cards, and bar).—J. H. LEVER, Town Hall, Rochdale (Rochdale 3181).

Scunthorpe.—W. H. KENDALL, Civil Defence Headquarters, Comforts Avenue.

Southall.—R. N. ROOK, Town Hall (Southall 1374).

South Shields.—F. OLLIER, Borough Treasurer's Dept., Town Hall (South Shields 1380).

Stoke-on-Trent.—T. W. POOLE, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall, (Stoke-on-Trent 48241).

Walthamstow.—C. E. HARVEY, Treasurer's Dept., Town Hall, E.17.

Ware, Herts.—E. B. CULLEN, secretary, Herts A.R.P. Recorded Music Society, welcomes music-lovers to his home, 17, Jeffries Road, Ware, by appointment, and to meetings of the society, usually 3 p.m. first Sunday each month at The Priory, Ware.

Weymouth.—R. W. MILLER, Municipal Offices.

Wimbledon.—J. W. BABBS, Borough Engineer's Dept., Town Hall, S.W.19.

Winchester.—Miss J. Y. WALSH, Treasurer's Dept., Guildhall.

Wrexham.—H. BROOKFIELD, Borough Surveyor's Dept., 1, Grosvenor Road.

Yeovil.—Miss J. L. KEBBELL, B.A., Municipal Buildings

PERSONAL

Birmingham.—G. F. WILLCOX, 143, Southam Road, Hall Green, Birmingham 28 (Springfield 2254); Miss D. UDALL, 55, Pakfield Road, King's Norton, Birmingham 30 (King's Norton 2436).

Bromsgrove.—E. W. GOODMAN, The Pines, Stourbridge Road (secretary of Bromsgrove branch).

Cheadle, Hulme, Cheshire.—D. DARRICOTTE, Grove House, Grove Lane (Bramhall 306) offers "meals, bath, bed, snooker, table-tennis," etc., to members who should write or phone first.

Harrogate.—E. L. DELLOW, 4, Woodside (office, Harrogate 503 : home, 2808).

Scarborough.—H. WILSON, 32, Newlands Avenue.

South Shields.—J. Y. FAWCETT, "Earldene," 11, Windermere Crescent, Harton (South Shields 1000).

Stourbridge.—J. H. CLARK, Southgate, Norton Road, Stourbridge (Stourbridge 5715).

Windleham, Surrey.—G. LOWE, "Kersal," Woodlands Lane.

And for Women, Too

The following branches offer hospitality and assistance to women members and relatives of members transferred to factories in the area:

Bilston.—Miss M. JOHNSON, Kingswood House, Wellington Road.

Blackburn.—NALGO Sports and Social Club, J. COX, 42, Victoria Street.

Bolton.—Miss E. HOGG, Town Clerk's Office.

Cambridgeshire.—Miss W. E. ALDER BARRETT, County Library, Shire Hall, Cambridge.

Cheltenham.—Miss B. A. RICHARDS, Health Dept., Municipal Offices (Cheltenham 2001).

Croydon.—A. E. ALLEN, Public Assistance Dept., Mayday Road, Thornton Heath (CROYDON 4433, Mayday Switchboard, Ext. 122).

Derby.—Miss D. A. JONES, "Elmhurst," Lonsdale Place, Uttoxeter New Road.

Feltham, Middx.—Miss B. E. CARTER, Council Offices, Bridge House (Feltham 2281).

Grantham.—Miss M. LYNN, Housing Supervisor, 36, Avenue Road.

Lincoln.—Miss F. P. HARROLD, Infant Welfare Centre, Newland Lincoln.

Maidstone.—Miss B. W. SOLOMON, County Hall.

Newton-le-Willows, Lancs.—Miss F. B. JONES, Public Library, Crows Lane, East.

North Cheshire.—Miss ATHERTON, Town Clerk's Dept., Sale.

Southall.—R. N. ROOK, Town Hall (Southall 1374).

South-West Gloucestershire.—Mrs. M. B. HARRIS, Council Offices, Kingswood, near Bristol.

Stoke-on-Trent.—T. W. POOLE, Town Clerk's Office, Town Hall (Stoke-on-Trent 48241).

Swindon.—Miss M. HURTNOL, Treasurer's (Rates) Dept., Civic Offices.

Winchester.—Miss J. Y. WALSH, Treasurer's Dept., Guildhall.

Wrexham.—Miss M. E. THORPE, 94, Rhosnessney Lane (Wrexham 2925).

A CHALLENGE TO NALGO WOMEN

By MARY HOWIE, of Glasgow, whose stirring call for action now to implement the policy of equal pay for women doing equal work with men was an outstanding feature of this year's Conference. We shall gladly publish the views of other women members.

“ SO, fellow delegates, I ask you to support the motion—and MEAN it ! ”

It was my maiden speech at a NALGO Conference, the moving of Glasgow's motion on equal pay for equal work, and I sat down amid cheers and resounding applause from all : exalted N.E.C. down to humbler creation delegates. Very gratifying—or was it ?

To stand up in a crowded hall and say that this state of affairs is wrong and must be put right is one thing, but it is a different matter to translate words into deeds—no, not merely to translate them, but to ensure the active participation of everyone concerned in the translation. This is a big thing in which every one must do her bit—you who expect to stay in the job till you are superannuated, you who are in the job only till your husband comes back from the Forces, you who have just started work and think of your salary as something which you hand over to Mother and from which she hands you back a too small amount of pocket-money !

Having won our point at Conference, we may do one of two things :

We may sit back and hope that someone, somehow, will do something to bring about this New Order ; or

We can work intelligently, sincerely, and by sheer perseverance justify our demands for equality of opportunity, and equal pay for equal work and responsibility.

To those who belong to the first group I would say that in every campaign which the world has ever known there have been the isolationists, the neutrals, the parasites—those who want all the privileges of a democratic order without any of the stress and strain of helping to bring it about.

To those who belong to this class, I would say : “ Fall out of the ranks now—don't even give lip-service to this campaign, but just sit back, comfortably waiting. Then, when victory is won, and you are enjoying the good things for which others have worked and striven, then you can truly say, as a mere man (but a good 'un) once remarked : ‘ Never have so many owed so much to so few ! ’ ”

For, astounding as it may seem, I believe that the number of women who belong to the second group, the fighters in this campaign, can indeed be reckoned as “ few. ” Every woman wants an adjustment to be made, but every woman is by no means willing to work for it. It's easy enough to grumble in corners, to talk about your widowed mother and say, “ It isn't fair ! ”—and then to leave it at that, cursing your luck that you weren't born a man. There's no bad luck in being a woman if you realise your opportunities and make the most of them, if you refuse to recognise the old hoodoo of supposed inferiority or to be flattered into agreeing that women are “ superior ” in some things (like scrubbing and sympathising), but inferior when it comes to a question of equal pay.

So to the second group I would say : “ Strive for strong representation on your branch executive. Strive for local recognition ; plan and work for local re-grading. Use the Journal to publicise the inadequate scales of salaries which apply to women, as compared with men, in local government. And, above all, try to bring all women not only round to your way of thinking, but into the ranks of those who support their beliefs by continuous action, till the demands of women can be ignored or by-passed no longer.”

Obituary

SIR JAMES CURTIS

WE regret to record the death, on June 29, at the age of 84, of Sir James Curtis, K.B.E., D.L., J.P., who had been a member of the Board of Management of Logomia since 1904 and was President of the former National Poor Law Officers' Association in 1906.

Sir James had a distinguished record of 50 years' local government service and was one of the leading authorities of his time on poor law administration. After having been clerk to the Norwich and King's Norton Boards of Guardians, he became, on the amalgamation of the poor law unions in the neighbourhood of Birmingham in 1912, clerk and solicitor to the newly-constituted Birmingham Board of Guardians and clerk to the Birmingham Assessment Committee. He resigned the former office in 1927, but continued to serve as clerk to the Assessment Committee until 1935.

He served on the Consultative Committee on Local Health Administration, the Central Valuation Committee, and the Railway Assessment Authority, in each case having been appointed by the Minister of Health.

During the last war Sir James, who was Food Commissioner for the Midlands, introduced, in an attempt to get rid of food queues in Birmingham, a local rationing scheme which became the basis of the national system. He also introduced in Birmingham a scheme for fixing the retail prices of fish, fruit, and vegetables which was later applied to the whole country. From 1936 to 1941 he was Divisional Food Officer for the Midlands and had been acting since then as an unpaid adviser to the Ministry of Food. Sir James was knighted in 1919. He leaves a widow, son, and daughter.

Warm tributes to Sir James' work for Logomia were paid at the meeting of the N.E.C. on July 11, and the Council stood for a moment in silence as a mark of respect.

FIRE PREVENTION (BUSINESS PREMISES) (No. 2) ORDER, 1941

Reimbursement of Subsistence Allowances to Occupiers

WE have supplies of forms which make provision for parts 1 and 2 of Home Security Circular No. 255/1941, supplementary to the above Order.

Patterns are also available for Home Security Circular No. 256/1941 covering allowances for Civil Defence Workers.

In all cases designs are available to permit the use of Kalamazoo Visible Equipment with its resulting speed-up in posting and reference.

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greatly facilitates the distribution of expense over departments or services. Large numbers of Authorities are finding this system of the greatest possible help in coping with the increased items of expenditure.

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A FEATURE of modern life is the introduction of government by pronouncement. In the pleasant days of peace—for pleasant they were, however the advocates of new orders think it necessary to condemn the old—one went to bed reasonably assured of waking to a world not noticeably different. Our modes of life, our little rounds of work and play, had a quality of permanence, and change grew upon us gracefully and gradually. Occasionally came the realisation that in some particular direction the existing state of affairs was unsatisfactory. Gentlemen full of zeal wrote letters to the Press, and editors skilled in following hard on the heels of public opinion took up the cry. Men in public-houses discussed the trend of events gravely between appreciative sips. The Hon. Member for Lower Pigling asked a relevant question in the House, and received a vague assurance that the whole matter, whatever it might be, would receive the earnest consideration of the Minister. The Minister asked the Permanent Under-Secretary what the devil it was all about, and months later was presented with a mass of statistics and a draft Bill, housing a tiny kernel of decision in a protective mass of jargon. Finally, scarred and mutilated by its slow passage through committee, the Bill became an Act. Democracy had laid another egg, the necessary change had been made, and the nation—long prepared for its coming and satisfied that there had been full and free discussion—accepted it philosophically.

Happy days indeed! Let others deride, but I rate that tortuous, difficult and blessedly slow method of legislation as still the best method of achieving lasting reform in normal times, because an educated and informed public opinion has ample time and opportunity to make its maximum impact on proposals before they become law.

But these are not normal times, and the sure means cannot be employed because they are too slow. Now, therefore, Ministers with squeaky, asthmatical, or boomerang voices invade the nine o'clock news unexpectedly and shatter our morale for the evening by exploding one more bombshell suddenly into our ears. This or that is to be rationed; this or that new duty must be undertaken; this or that new sacrifice is required; this or that privilege must be withdrawn. Whatever it is, we usually grin and bear it, but the lack of mental pre-conditioning doesn't help. We have a democratic resentment of the fact that once the Ministerial voice has spoken no more may be said. "That was another dose of medicine, and that was the Minister for So-and-so administering it."

Occasionally the Press is chosen to announce the new mandate. Thus the forty-six-hour week for clerical workers burst upon us as a Ministerial statement to the Press. Until then, it had been such a well-kept secret that even local authorities—so often the handmaidens of the great and therefore so often afforded the privilege of prior information—were taken by surprise. Indeed, in Much Cowslip the Clerk, because it was his paperless day, knew nothing about it until he borrowed mine for the usual mid-morning informal rest-period. On his return,

after a much shorter absence than usual, he consulted me about the local situation.

Our only deferred staff were Blatherpatch and Miss Legge. The former was anything but popular with the Clerk, who would have viewed his departure with equanimity, but Miss Legge was a different proposition altogether. One of the few instructions religiously observed was that the Clerk must never be disturbed when dictating, and the occasions when Miss Legge emerged with a becoming blush and rumpled hair were not lost upon his observant staff. Perhaps even more important, she had a deft touch with buttered scones and teacups, which made four o'clock a feature of our day. The prospect of her transference to less congenial work in an armament factory could not be contemplated. There was, therefore, no alternative, as the Clerk made clear to me, but the early adoption of the forty-six-hour week.

His decision had to be confirmed formally by the Council, who were accordingly summoned to an emergency meeting. Told that the only way to avoid wholesale loss of staff was to adopt the new hours, they agreed readily, on the distinct understanding that the extra hours were spread evenly over the days of the week to prevent tear allowances becoming payable. Councillor Gumble asked what contribution to the war effort would be made by the same number of staff taking seven hours longer to do the same work, but nobody troubled to tell him. "Major FitzWalk FitzGallop said something about releasing one-sixth of the staff for the Forces, but subsided when the Chairman pointed out we had only one Sanitary Inspector, and five-sixths of him would be inadequate."

In justice to myself, I did suggest to the



"Ministers . . . invade the nine o'clock news . . ."

Clerk that perhaps the staff might be consulted, but he was so genuinely surprised by the idea that I didn't press it. Surely, he said, the fixing of official hours was his business, subject only to the Council's approval, and the staff could not reasonably expect to decide for themselves how much or how little they would work. As a result, the first news the staff received of the impending increase of hours was a notice on the notice-board. The result was an immediate commotion.

Whether war conditions have brought a relaxation of that iron discipline which made the local government service what it is, or whether it is true that not only worms but even local government officers do occasionally turn, I cannot say, but to my surprise the executive committee meeting over which the Clerk as Chairman presided a week later was more like a Whitley Council than its usual calm and pleasant self.

So rapidly did one protest follow another, and so vigorous were the interjections and verbal duels, that I could not keep my usual full notes. There appeared to be three schools of thought: those who claimed to be realists and emphasised that compelling the clerical staff to work a longer week could not enable local authorities to release the specialists and key-men who were the only ones still deferred; those who maintained that, as all necessary (and some unnecessary) work had been carried out so far, an increase of official hours was merely a hypocritical gesture at their expense; and those who, themselves over military age, were convinced that any staffs still deferred could easily be spared without all this nonsense about extra hours. It was obvious they were agreed on one point—they were ready to work any number of hours if there was a real contribution to the war effort, but otherwise they were against it. Speaker after speaker detailed extra voluntary duties connected with the war, until I began to wonder how and when any of the staff managed to snatch a few hours' sleep.

Blatherpatch moved a resolution, seconded by Miss Legge, expressing admiration for all our allies, including the Duchy of Luxembourg, and pledging us to work "such hours as may be deemed desirable to further the national war effort, and to prevent local government being deprived of the necessary minimum of essential staff still deferred." He was sure the executive committee needed no assurance that he was actuated by no petty personal motive, but it was plain that local government—while not dependent upon any particular officer in any authority—could not continue to function as it must if its remaining experienced staff were withdrawn. Their duty lay clearly before them; let them to it like men.

Miss Legge, making a maiden speech, was received with storms of applause, and a voice: "Plucky little woman!" She agreed with everything Mr. Blatherpatch had said, and could only add to the women of Much Cowslip "Let us also to our duty—but in our case, of course, like women."

Once more driven into the position that if they sought to protect their own interests they

(Continued on next page, column 1)

AT RANDOM, by "Hyperion"

175

refresher Course

What is the smell of mustard gas? I never could smell a thing. I pretended I did to please the lecturer.

Mustard has a faint smell described as resembling horse-radish, onions, garlic, or stale aseline.

I am not familiar with the smell of stale aseline.

How then would you distinguish mustard as?

By my not being able to smell it.

But suppose mustard gas were used in combination with a persistent gas that did smell, say KSK?

That would be cheating.

* * * * —A. P. Herbert.

front-line Conversation

"Were you in the raid last night?"

"Never heard a thing. Anything much?"

"They got a house in — Street."

"Good heavens! Much damage?"

"Three fruit-machines—50 names taken."

* * * *

Morale

An old Scottish woman says: "When the air-raid warning sounds, I take the Bible from the shelf and read the Twenty-third Psalm. Then I put up a wee bit prayer. Then I take a wee dram o' whisky to steady my nerves. Then I get in bed and pull up the covers. And then I tell Hitler to go to hell!"

(Continued from preceding page)

could be made to appear unpatriotic, the executive wavered and were lost. In glum silence they accepted the Clerk's advice that in their country's hour of need they should reluctantly yet readily shoulder their burdens. Blatherpatch's resolution was carried by four votes to nil, with eleven abstentions.

Only when the Clerk, with the air of a well-stroked tabby, was about to declare the meeting closed, did a small voice from the back enquire whether we were to be paid for the additional hours, and point out that the National Whitley Council had approved a scheme providing for overtime payments.

The Clerk and I were unprepared for this unexpected thrust, perhaps because neither of us has taken anything but an academic interest in Whitley Councils. To hear it suggested that Much Cowslip should pay any attention to a national award, especially one to which the Council could not be expected to react favourably, temporarily unbalanced us. Before the Clerk had recovered his composure and control, the meeting had hurriedly and with loud cheers carried a motion that the branch officers be instructed to secure the legal adoption of the award.

When the Clerk and I obtained a copy of the National Whitley Council's award, he was at first delighted with its provisions and spent some happy moments with the comptometer calculating his hourly rate at time-and-a-quarter or time-and-a-half. When I pointed out, however, that, as his salary, was £510 per annum, though he would receive not less than an officer on £500 for the extra hours up to forty-six, he was not entitled to payment for hours worked beyond forty-six, his enthusiasm waned abruptly. But there is a solution to any difficulty, and the minutes of the last meeting of the Much Cowslip Council record its grateful acknowledgment of a voluntary offer by the Clerk to accept a reduction in his salary from £510 to £500 per annum, "in view of the urgent need for economy."

Since the Clerk is now eligible to participate fully in the provisions of the award and, indeed, has in effect wagered £10 a year on his ability to secure its adoption, I feel that we have reasonable grounds for optimism. Time alone will show.

This England—

No extra or special trains are being put on either at Crewe or anywhere else. To get all these travellers away we have merely augmented the existing time-table and run relief trains in duplicate.

—*Railway official quoted in "The Star."*

—And This Local Government

An old lady who had been blitzed applied to the council for a bedstead. She was sympathetically received and told that she would get one in due course.

"But I want it now," she protested. "I have nothing to sleep on!"

"Oh, that's all right," replied the sympathetic officer. "The grant will be retrospective!"

—*"The Spectator."*

Many Happy Returns

I say! The bank has returned my cheque!

Splendid, darling! What shall we buy with it this time?

* * * *

Is that officer annoyed with you? I notice he didn't return your salute.

Oh, he's my neighbour. He never returns anything.

—*From "Municipal Affairs," journal of the South African Federation of Municipal Employees.*

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176 HOW MEMBERS ARE PROTECTED Successful Actions for Slander and Libel

FURTHER evidence of the value of NALGO's legal advice and assistance to members has been provided by two recent cases.

In the first, the clerk to a borough council was slandered by an alderman and former mayor, who alleged in open council that the clerk had failed to observe standing orders, had been lax and dilatory in his duties, and had deliberately falsified minutes.

When the first two slanders were uttered, in August 1940, the clerk sought the advice of the Association's legal department, primarily with a view to putting a stop to the attacks. He was advised that the statements complained of were defamatory and actionable, but decided that it would not be right, in present circumstances, to allow his own time or that of a Court to be taken up in personal litigation.

A year later, however, the alderman made another attack in open council upon the clerk, this time alleging that the minutes of a meeting of the council in committee had been garbled, and adding: "The town clerk is of course to blame. Surely we should expect a man with £1,000 a year salary to give us a correct version of what transpired. I suggest that it is done to hide the real facts."

The clerk, who had in fact recorded the minutes strictly in accordance with the practice of the council, again consulted the Association. He was advised that this further allegation was plainly defamatory and actionable, but decided, solely in view of the national position, to take no action provided the alderman would make an unqualified withdrawal and apology at a public meeting of the council.

The Association's solicitor invited the alderman to make this withdrawal and apology, but he refused, contending that the statements attributed to him had not been correctly reported, that the words actually used were spoken in the course of public duty, on privileged occasions, did not bear the meanings placed on them, and did not go beyond the bounds of legitimate comment.

Judge's Stern Warning

Still reluctant to take proceedings, the clerk made one more attempt, through the Association's solicitors, to obtain an apology, but the alderman again refused, and the clerk had thus no alternative but to initiate proceedings. This was done through the Association's solicitors, who briefed counsel, and the case came before Mr. Justice Charles at the local Assizes last month.

The hearing lasted four hours and, in summing up, Mr. Justice Charles described it as "the plainest case of slander I have ever heard." He was satisfied, he said, that the town clerk had carried out his duties with propriety and in such a way that no man of normal intelligence or good feeling could comment adversely upon his capabilities or performances. The allegations made against him were untrue, and the alderman knew that they were untrue. The alderman had refused, even at the last moment in the witness box, to apologise.

This was a case, the judge continued, in which, in the normal course, he would award heavy damages, but in view of the town clerk's statement that he was concerned not with damages, but solely to clear his name and prevent further attacks upon him, he would award only nominal damages of £100, with costs.

At the conclusion of his judgment, Mr. Justice Charles pointed out that an injunction had not been asked for. In view, however, of the alderman's repeated refusal to apologise, and of his attitude in the witness box, the judge had no confidence that he would refrain from further slanderous statements, and therefore gave permission to counsel to apply for an

injunction. This was done, and the injunction was granted, restraining the alderman from "repeating or publishing the same or similar further defamatory matter of or concerning the plaintiff, in the way of his profession or occupation, or otherwise."

"I want to warn the defendant against any repetition of slander of this sort," the judge declared. "Otherwise, let me tell him, he may find himself in the criminal court and subject to a considerable term of imprisonment. This has got to stop, and any sort of repetition will be visited heavily upon the utterer of any further slanders."

The town clerk concerned has intimated that he proposes to hand to the Benevolent and Orphan Fund any surplus of the £100 damages left over after the payment of costs not allowed on taxation.

CLERK LIBELED

Apology in Court

The second case arose out of two statements circulated to the public by a member of an urban district council. The first was a general attack on the council's policy and administration, while the second, issued a year later, made specific allegations against the chairman of the council and the clerk, accusing both of "low-down trickery" in neglecting to bring a notice of motion submitted by the councillor before the council. The clerk was further accused of lying to the council, and of drafting committee minutes that were not a correct record of what took place, while it was suggested that the report of the Government auditor had been "deliberately kept hidden away."

Superannuation Appeal Saves Member £424

ANOTHER of the Association's services to members is illustrated by two superannuation appeals submitted to the Minister of Health.

In the first, the member concerned had in 1935 entered into an agreement with the local authority to pay by instalments the sum of £405 and interest to entitle her to reckon a period of 20 years' previous service for pension purposes under the provisions of a local Act superannuation scheme. By April 1, 1939, when the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, came into operation, she had paid £364 in respect of principal, and £44 in respect of interest under the agreement.

The local authority took the view that, when that Act came into operation, the agreement ceased to have effect and that the member was entitled in respect of the sum already paid under the agreement to reckon so much of her previous service as would have been reckonable had the sum been paid under the Local Government Superannuation (Additional Contributory Payment) Regulations, 1939, but that the remaining part of such service would not be reckonable except on payment by her of an additional sum ascertained in accordance with those regulations. This meant that she was entitled to reckon only eight of the 20 years' service for pension purposes and could become entitled to reckon the remaining part of 12 years only by paying a further sum of £465, as against the balance of £41 outstanding under the agreement. The member was, therefore, faced with the alternative of paying an additional amount of £424 or losing 12 years for pension purposes.

In its appeal to the Minister, the Association argued that by a section in the local superannuation Act the member's superannuation rights acquired under the agreement with the local authority were preserved to her and that she was entitled, on payment of the £41 outstanding under that agreement, to reckon the whole of the 20 years' previous service as

Although the clerk had restrained from taking action after the issue of the first circular, he felt that he could not allow the second, with its serious reflections upon his honesty and efficiency, to pass unchallenged, and accordingly approached the Association. He was advised by the legal department that the statements were defamatory and actionable. A letter was thereupon written to the councillor concerned demanding a public withdrawal of and apology for the statements he had made. The councillor, however, refused to make such a withdrawal and apology in satisfactory terms, and it was decided to initiate proceedings for libel. Before this could be done, however, it was learned that, on the information of the chairman of the council, the local police had taken action against the councillor on a charge of criminal libel against the chairman and the clerk. In these circumstances independent action by the clerk was deferred, pending the result of the hearing of this charge.

After a hearing in the local police court, the councillor was committed for trial at the Assizes. At the first hearing the councillor submitted a lengthy plea of justification, containing serious allegations, which the prosecution had not previously seen, and in view of this the hearing was adjourned to the next Assizes. When the case came up again for hearing his counsel read a statement signed by the councillor in which he declared that he had never intended to accuse either the chairman of the council or the clerk of dishonest or criminal conduct and undertook, in consideration of the case standing adjourned, not in future to defame either, orally or in writing. The case was then adjourned again to the next Assizes and, in view of the undertaking given, the clerk decided not to proceed further with his proposed civil action for libel.

contributing service for superannuation purposes.

The Minister's decision was in favour of the member, with the result that she is entitled to reckon the whole of her 20 years' previous service as contributing service for a payment of £41 instead of £465.

In the second case, the local authority, in notifying the member of the amount of his service which he was entitled to reckon as service for the purposes of the Local Government Superannuation Act, 1937, did not include a period of five years' service from 1894 to 1899 which he had had as a pupil teacher at the Bratton Clovelly School, Devon.

The Association appealed to the Minister, who decided that, as the school in question was under the control of the Bratton Clovelly School Board, the five years' service under that Board should be regarded as service rendered to a local authority for the purposes of the Superannuation Act of 1937 and was, therefore, reckonable as non-contributing service.

Defence of a Midwife

YET a third example of the Association's help is provided by the case of a midwife, member of a north-country branch, who was charged by the secretary of the Central Midwives' Board with having disobeyed Rule E.21 of the rules and regulations of the Board, an offence for which she was liable to be struck off the roll of midwives and prohibited from attending any woman in childbirth.

The organising secretary represented the midwife at an inquiry by the Central Midwives Board and, while pleading guilty to the charge, appealed for leniency, citing a number of extenuating factors which had led to the failure to obey the rule. He urged that justice would be met by regarding the technical breach of the rule as an error of judgment.

The Board upheld this appeal and, while censoring the midwife, agreed not to strike her name off the roll.

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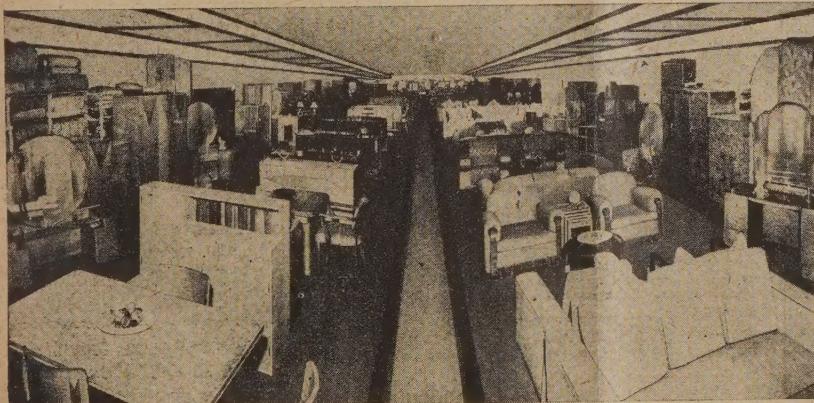
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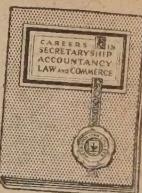
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AN INVITATION

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THE Nurses' Salaries Committee, meeting on July 10 under the chairmanship of Professor T. M. Taylor, appointed sub-committees to prepare draft salary scales for midwives and health visitors. The divisional secretary was appointed to represent the Association on the sub-committee for health visitors' salaries, which is also to include representatives from the Scottish Health Visitors' Association.

The committee further considered salary scales and has now provisionally agreed on recommendations for scales for probationers, staff nurses, and ward sisters.

When the executive committee of the Scottish district committee met on June 20, the replies received on the establishment of women's committees were reported. Each branch is urged to establish a women's committee and to notify the district committee secretary as soon as it has been set up.

The district committee constitution and rules were examined, in view of the fact that amendments have become necessary. A revised draft constitution will be submitted for approval to the annual meeting.

The executive committee also considered the questionnaire issued by the NALGO reconstruction committee, and prepared a list of points for more detailed consideration. A special sub-committee, consisting of Messrs. R. Adams (chairman), S. H. Brodie (vice-chairman), J. Brown, L. B. Dymock and R. Wood, with Mr. J. M. Anderson (secretary of the district committee) and the divisional secretary, was set up to consider the points and to report to the executive committee.

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SALARIES AND SERVICE CONDITIONS

NORTH-EASTERN

Consett U.D. has accepted, with slight modification, a memorandum submitted by the divisional officer in support of an application for improved salary scales and has adopted the following:

Men :
Junior Division : £55 (at 16)—£110 (at 20)
General Division : £130 (at 21)—£220 (at 27)
(N.E.J.C. scale)

Clerical Division : Sect. A : £235 + 10 (1) + 15 (2)
—£275

Sect. B : £285 + 15 (2)—£315
Professional, Technical and Administrative Division :
Grade A : £240 + 15 (5)—£315
Grade B : £330 + 15 (3)—£375
Grade C : £390 + 15 (3)—£435
Grade D : £450 + 20 (3)—£510

Women :
Junior and General Divisions : N.E.J.C. scales
Grade I : £145 + 15 (3)—£190

Crook and Willington U.D. has granted an application by the divisional officer for the following improved salary scales:

Men :
Junior and General Divisions : N.E.J.C. scales
Professional, Technical and Administrative Division :
Grade A : £240 + 15 (5)—£315
Grade B : £330 + 15 (3)—£375

Women :
Junior and General Divisions : N.E.J.C. scales
Felling U.D. has adopted the N.E.J.C. scales for men and women.

Wallsend B. has adopted the N.E.J.C. scales for men and women, and has agreed to become a constituent member of the provincial council.

NORTH-WESTERN AND NORTH WALES
Burnley C.B. has agreed to pay a proportionate cost-of-living bonus to two part-time officers.

Cheadle and Gatley U.D. has re-graded a woman officer who had appealed to the Whitley Council appeals committee. The appeal has accordingly been withdrawn.

Glossop B. has granted applications for the re-grading of two women officers.

Liverpool C.B. has granted an application for reconsideration of the dismissal of a temporary officer.

Northwich U.D. and Accrington and Church Outfall Sewerage Board, as a result of NALGO applications, have both passed resolutions safeguarding the position of officers directed to other employment under the Registration for Employment Order.

Prescot U.D.—A new branch has been formed for the staff of this authority. The assistant divisional secre-

their position as contributors to national health insurance and contributory pensions. This was made clear by Miss Horsbrugh, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Health, on June 30, when, in reply to a question in the House of Commons, she said :

"Payments for overtime arising solely out of war conditions, that is to say, where overtime was not a regular feature of employment in peacetime, are regarded as temporary only and are, therefore, omitted from the calculation of the rate of remuneration for the purposes of the National Health Insurance and Contributory Pensions Acts."

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The rates of premium for NALGO motor car insurances have been reduced by 10 per cent from July, 1942. The cumulative no-claims bonus will be on the same basis as hitherto :

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Saving Bonds Policies

Since the Government has withdrawn the 1955-65 issue of savings bonds and replaced them by an issue of 1960-70 bonds, local government officers may require savings bonds policies for terms of 18 years. Logomia has, therefore, had tables prepared for with and without profits savings bonds endowments for a term of 18 years, but it has been decided not to withdraw the 13-year savings bonds endowment for the time being.

Further details of either of the above matters can be obtained from the NALGO Motor Department and the NALGO Life Department, NALGO Centre, Croyde, Braunton, Devon.

YORKSHIRE

Bradford C.B. has increased the maximum of the salaries scales for sanitary inspectors from £300 to £345, as a result of joint representations by the Association and the Sanitary Inspectors' Association, and has agreed to improved salaries for nursing staffs at St. Luke's Hospital and Leeds Road Hospital, and for ticket clerks and mileage clerks in the transport department.

SOUTH-EASTERN

Godalming B. has decided to adopt rates of pay and conditions of service not less favourable than those approved by the Southern Home Counties provincial council.

SOUTH-WESTERN

Gloucester C.B. has adopted the South-Western provincial council scales and has decided to become a constituent member of the Whitley Council.

Behind this announcement lies a story of more than 2½ years' persistent effort by the branch, assisted by the divisional officer, to persuade the council to bring its standards into line with modern requirements, and the branch is to be congratulated upon the successful negotiations, which have involved many meetings and deputations, the preparation of memoranda, and, what is more important, the courage to stand by their opinions.

The original salary scales were of 1924 vintage, and the council had introduced half grades within the scheme because of the need for adjustment. In addition, it had given a cost-of-living bonus much below the Whitley Council recommendation.

During the negotiations it was fairly clear that, although the town was prosperous, some members of the council regarded Gloucester as a depressed area inhabited by people who could "just manage to pay their rates," and that seemed to be the excuse for expecting local government officers to have a lower salary than elsewhere.

Finally, however, the Mayor rose to the occasion, and was instrumental in persuading the council.

WHITELEYISM CONFERENCES

To spread a knowledge of Whiteleyism and to increase support for the provincial council, more conferences of

NALGO ADDRESSES

To avoid delay, members are asked to address correspondence as follows :

Relating to education, Benevolent and Orphan Fund, Approved Society, Building Society, Provident Society, Logomia, thrift and colours section, printing and stationery for all sections, supply of "Local Government Service," Roll of Honour, and organisation department records to Headquarters:

The General Secretary, NALGO Centre, Croyde, Braunton, North Devon. Telephone and Telegrams: Croyde 212.

Relating to Public Relations and "Local Government Service" (editorial), to—

The Public Relations Officer, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGware 225).

Relating to "Local Government Service" advertisements to—

A. Darby's Advertising Agency, Cobham House, 24, Black Friars Lane, London, E.C.4. (City 6686).

On all other subjects in the first place to the appropriate district office :

SOUTHERN REGION

Regional Officer (and Metropolitan District) : T. M. Kershaw, 192, Edgwarebury Lane, Edgware, Middlesex (EDGware 2025).

Divisional Officer (Eastern and South-Eastern districts) : F. Thomas, 54, New Street, Chelmsford (Chelmsford 4347).

Divisional Officer (Southern and South-Western districts) : N. M. Woodcock, 16, The Crescent, Taunton (Taunton 2779).

E. and W. MIDLANDS AND S. WALES

Regional Officer (and E. and W. Midland district) : J. E. N. Davis, 14, Earlsbury Gardens, Birchfields, Birmingham 20 (Birchfields 5123).

Divisional Officer (S. Wales and Monmouthshire districts) : A. H. Geary, 11, Park Place, Cardiff (Cardiff 1646).

NORTH-WESTERN AND NORTH WALES

National Whitley Officer and Divisional Secretary : Haden Corser, 2, Mount Street, Manchester 2 (Blackfriars 7668).

NORTH-EASTERN AND YORKSHIRE

Divisional Secretary : W. Cecil Wood, 12, East Parade, Leeds (Leeds 24861).

Divisional Officer (North-Eastern district) : W. J. Upton, Milburn House A, Dean Street, Newcastle-upon-Tyne 1. (Newcastle 24900).

SCOTISH

Divisional Secretary : H. Slater, 67, West Nile Street, Glasgow, C.I. (Douglas 0404).

LONDON OFFICE

The General Secretary, 27, Abingdon Street, Westminster, S.W.1. Telephone and Telegrams : WHitehall 9351.

Local authorities in county districts have been arranged in the South-West.

At a meeting of the Somerset authorities, held at Taunton on June 25, Sir Arthur Hobhouse, chairman of the county council, presided, and at the meeting at Gloucester, attended by the representatives of the authorities in that county, Sir Frederic Cripps, chairman of the county council, presided. Another meeting was held at Dorchester on July 10, attended by representatives of the authorities in Dorset, at which the Mayor of Dorchester presided.

These meetings were all well attended, and it is expected that they will result in increased membership of the Whitley Council. The divisional officer addressed each conference on the advantages of Whitleyism, and many questions and much useful discussion followed.

SOUTH WALES

Cardiff C.B. has amended the old salary scales (£90—£200, with intervening maxima at £130 and £170) to : £90 + £10 (6)—£150
£160 + £10 (4)—£200

Consideration of a scale above £200 was adjourned.

South Western District Committee.

Despite the recent "blitz" on Exeter, it was possible to hold the district committee meeting on Saturday, July 18.

The divisional officer's report showed continued progress in salaries and Whitleyism in the area, leading to many improvements since the outbreak of war. Support for the South Western provincial council is increasing, and the bonus is being widely adopted.

Much discussion centred on the suggested extension of hours of work, and the committee was unanimous in inviting branches to follow the scheme approved by the provincial council.

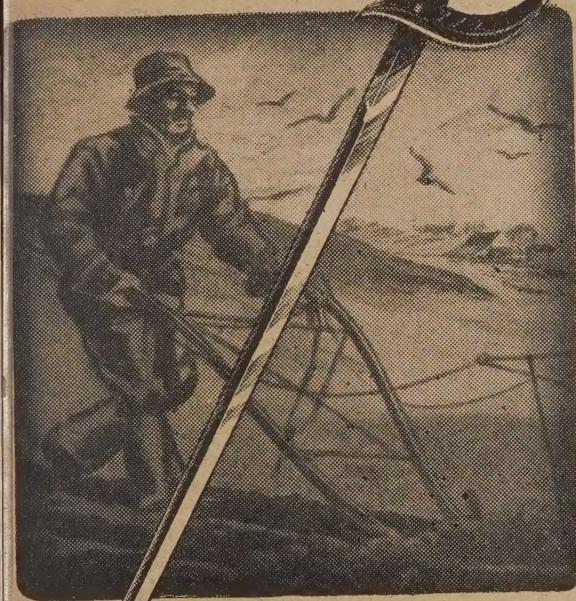
Cost of Living 29% Up

The Ministry of Labour cost of living index rose one point last month to 200, representing an increase of 29 per cent in the cost of living since the outbreak of war.

Stamp Exchange Club

The Colonial Stamp Exchange Club recently proposed by Mr. J. Holmes, deputy borough engineer, Dewsbury, is now established. A few more members (particularly contributors) will be welcome, and inquiries should be sent to Mr. Holmes at The Homestead, Ossett, York.

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